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Introducing WMLON: The Women's Musical Leadership Online Network

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Abstract: *Musical leadership, across many musical genres, remains male dominated. Musical leadership itself is often constructed as residing in male authority figures, quintessentially exemplified in classical music through the maestro conductor. This 'maestro myth' (as Norman Lebrecht characterised it, 1997) has been perpetuated since the mid-nineteenth century through the 'maestro writing tradition' of male conductors from Berlioz (1843) and Wagner (1869), through Stokowski (1944), Furtwängler (1953), and Boult (1963), to Boulez (2003). This chapter shifts the spotlight to considering women's musical leadership and explores the impetuses behind the founding of the Women's Musical Leadership Online Network (WMLON), by the authors in 2019, and its initial findings. With the dual aim of both researching women's musical leadership and acting as a support network for women musical leaders and potential leaders, WMLON interrogates the current context of women in musical leadership with a specific focus on three areas: women in the music industries, women in educational leadership, and women leading contemporary musical practices. WMLON asserts that women's approaches to leadership are often different to those of men and calls for women to take ownership of this difference as a positive. Women are more likely to take part in 'transformational' training and are often 'more participatory, democratic and interpersonally sensitive' as leaders (Rhode 2019). This chapter acknowledges that there are feminist ways of knowing-doing and interrogates the need for women to have mentors, training, and support to break 'glass-ceilings'.*

Keywords: *leadership, women's leadership, musical leadership, mentoring.*

Musical leadership, across many musical genres, remains male dominated. We define musical leadership as a concept which incorporates the roles musicians, in practice, take not only as conductors and musical directors, rather encompassing all leadership activity, all musicking activity, from project managing events, to leading workshops and lessons, to managing charities and networks, to leading change on the ground in small-scale projects, to leading instrumental ensembles, to leading sales and marketing, outreach work, to leading advocacy and activism activity. The focus here is the specific role of women in this context. Musical leadership itself is often constructed as residing in male

authority figures, quintessentially exemplified in classical music through the figure of the maestro male conductor. This “maestro myth”, as Norman Lebrecht (1997) has characterized it, has been perpetuated since the mid-nineteenth century through the “maestro-writing tradition” of male conductors from Berlioz and Wagner, through Stokowski, Furtwängler and Boult, to Boulez. The maestro tradition was so powerful for so long that it actively and effectively marginalized other voices within musical leadership, including those of women. Given its dominance, this chapter first considers how the maestro tradition first arose in the nineteenth century and how it came to endure so strongly well beyond. Discussion is then shifted to considering women’s musical leadership and exploring the impetuses behind the founding of the Women’s Musical Leadership Online Network (WMLON), by the authors in 2019, and its initial findings. With the dual aim of both researching women’s musical leadership and acting as a support network for women musical leaders and potential leaders, WMLON interrogates the current context of women in musical leadership with a specific focus on three areas: women in the music industries, women in educational leadership and women leading contemporary musical practices. WMLON asserts that women’s approaches to leadership are often different to those of men and calls for women to take ownership of this difference as a positive. Women are more likely to take part in “transformational” training and are often “more participatory, democratic and interpersonally sensitive” as leaders (Rhode 2017: 5). This chapter acknowledges that there are feminist ways of knowing-doing and interrogates the need for women to have mentors, training and support to break “glass-ceilings”.

Confronting the Legacy of the Maestro Tradition

Dag Jansson (2019: 865) has noted that: “The conductor role, as we know it today, is a product of romanticism in the nineteenth century”. The figure of the baton-wielding conductor raised above the instrumental players and facing them from a podium emerged only gradually. During the earlier nineteenth century, the tradition of leading from the keyboard persisted; whilst in England “divided leadership” – with the directing role alternating between the keyboardist and the first violin – continued well into the nineteenth century; conducting with the hands, rather than using a baton, meanwhile, remained common within choral music. Although there have been accounts of musical performances being directed by sticks or rolls of paper dating back to the late sixteenth century, the use of the baton only became generally accepted between 1820 and 1840 (Bowen 2003: 101). The baton itself, as José Antonio Bowen (2003: 94–5) has commented, “has long been a symbol of power: the Pope has his staff and the Queen her scepter”. The baton is also, as Jeanice Brooks (1996: 98) has observed, a potentially phallic symbol.

As the role of the conductor crystalized during the nineteenth century, two conducting techniques emerged. Bowen and Raymond Holden (2003: 114) have identified these as “Mendelssohn’s more mechanical model of a ‘transparent’ conductor [...] and the more ‘subjective’ approach of Liszt and Wagner, where the execution of the ‘external’ musical details was dependent upon finding the true ‘internal’ meaning of the work”. With its clear association with Austro-German Romanticism, the Lisztian/Wagnerian model came to dominate, helping “to establish a core repertory of Austro-German musical

works and the German Romantic ideology that sustained them" (Bowen and Holden 2003: 114).

The conductor's place upon the podium consolidated and visually enforced their position as a powerful gatekeeper of the emerging Austro-German-dominated classical music canon. As this canon shifted from a living tradition to one which was preserved and curated through concert performance, their role as medium to the music's inner transcendental meaning grew and they replaced composers as the music's focal point. As Bowen and Holden (2003: 114) have observed:

With the deaths of Wagner and Brahms, the public's admiration and loyalty shifted from the composer to the virtuoso conductor. On posters, programs, and record jackets, the names of conductors grew larger as they gradually began to dominate the publicity that accompanied orchestral and operatic performances. By the middle of the twentieth century, conductors had become central to the marketing of music by record companies, opera houses, and concert organizations and were powerful figures in the music business.

Thus, conductors effectively replaced composers as the superstars of classical music.

Conductors were also active in fashioning their central positions within musical leadership through their own writings. As Jansson (2019: 865) has commented:

The shapers of modern day conducting, Wagner (1869) and Berlioz (1843) [...] were also those who started to write about it, a tradition that continued into the twentieth century [...] These represent the "maestro writing" tradition: the great master sharing his own experience and ideas.

Berlioz's *Le chef d'orchestre: Théorie de son art* (1843, revised edition 1855) and Wagner's *Über das Dirigieren* (1869) laid the foundation for a long tradition of conductors writing about conducting which stretches into the twenty-first century, with contributions from, amongst many others, Leopold Stokowski (1944), Wilhelm Furtwängler (1953), Adrian Boult (1963) and Pierre Boulez (1981 and 2003) (Logie 2012: 282–5). As Jansson (2019: 386) has observed: "The maestro-writing tradition clearly shows that conductors at the outset took ownership of the notion of musical leadership".

The maestro-writing tradition has had a strong influence on popular writing on conductors. Notable examples of this distinct genre include David Ewen's pre- and post-Second World War books, *The Man with the Baton: The Story of Conductors and Their Orchestras* (1936) and *Dictators of the Baton* (1948); Harold C. Schonberg's *The Great Conductors* (1967); and Helena Matheopoulos's *Maestro: Encounters with Conductors of Today* (1982). Norman Lebrecht, on the other hand, has critiqued the "maestro tradition", referring to it ironically as the "maestro myth" in his book *The Maestro Myth: Great Conductors in Pursuit of Power* (1997). "Maestro-writing" prose, and that which it has influenced, is very heavily masculinized. The "maestro-myth" genre focuses upon the supposedly "great" conductors whose origins lie in the Central European tradition, which includes such names as Hans von Bülow (1830–1894), Gustav Mahler (1860–1911), Otto Klemperer (1885–1973) and Herbert von Karajan (1908–1989).

Recognizing the romanticist drive of the maestro tradition is vital. Not only did the maestro tradition ground musical leadership – characterized as conducting – within one

musical tradition – but it also identified it with a particular set of characteristics: white, middle-class, able-bodied, male. Embodying the maestro figure in such a way has (historically) sought not to allow space for women or others outside the demographic it focused upon, including people of color, those of lower socio-economic class, or differently abled people. The long shadow of romanticism has been particularly hard to dispel when it comes to considerations of musical leadership.

Despite both the conscious efforts which male conductors took to center themselves upon the podium and the heavily masculinized rhetoric which was developed to bolster their position there, women have been active as conductors for centuries, although this tradition has (until recently) often been hidden from mainstream historiographical narratives. All-women orchestras were a particularly vibrant feature of nineteenth and earlier twentieth-century concert life. Josephine Amann-Weinlich founded the Wiener Damenorchester in Vienna in 1868, whilst the Los Angeles Women's Orchestra was established in 1893. Scores of similar all-women orchestras were founded in Europe and North America between the later nineteenth century and World War Two. These provided employment for the many professional women instrumentalists who struggled (with some exceptions) to be accepted into male orchestras and provided directing opportunities for women conductors, who often found it easier to find work with all-women orchestras. The situation changed when the military conscription of World War Two opened desks for women instrumentalists within the previously all-male orchestras, and very few all-women orchestras survived. Beyond some notable exceptions, such as Nadia Boulanger and Veronica Dudarowa, opportunities for women conductors in the mid-twentieth century were few (Hamer 2021: 65–71). This has changed since the later twentieth century, when women conductors started to gain greater acceptance. Now women such as Marin Alsop, Xian Zhang and Dalia Stasevska, to name but a few, are pursuing international careers and recognized amongst the most successful within the profession.

The strength of the maestro tradition as embodied by both male conductors and the heavily masculinized rhetoric of the maestro-writing tradition did, historically, make it difficult for women conductors to be accepted. Manifestations of this ranged from hostile or sexualized reviews, through discipline issues with male performers, to difficulties finding work. Opera and choral direction have often been an exception, as women such as Sarah Caldwell, Sian Edwards and Simone Young have pursued high-profile careers in these fields. J. Michele Edwards (2003: 233) has opined that this may be because “the conductor works in the pit rather than in the spotlight”. The all-women mentorship and training schemes, such as Alsop's Taki Alsop Conducting Fellowship in the US and Alice Farnham's Women Conductors Program in the UK, which have developed in recent years to support aspiring women conductors have had a tremendous positive impact (Hamer 2019: 37–8). Women conductors are now emerging as leaders of orchestras in much greater numbers.

However, within classical music such a strong prevailing association between conducting and musical leadership, and such a strong equivalence between the role of conductor and the male maestro figure can at times feel hard to see beyond. The deep identification of the figure of the conductor with the white, male body belies both the historical and the present-day reality of the conducting profession, which is much more diverse. Musical leadership itself, both within and beyond classical music, encompasses a

much broader set of activities and agencies than purely musical direction. Finally, unlike conducting – which has typically been a solitary pursuit – musical leadership conceived more broadly can incorporate both collective, as well as individual, leadership.

WMLON: Impetuses behind the Founding of the Women's Musical Leadership Online Network

The Women's Musical Leadership Online Network (WMLON) was initially founded by the authors in 2019: Women's Musical Leadership Online Network (WMLON) | Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (open.ac.uk). WMLON was established – originally as WMLOP (the Women's Musical Leadership Online Project) – following the first International Conference on Women in/and Musical Leadership (held in London, 7–9 March 2019) and speaks in partnership with *The Routledge Companion to Women and Musical Leadership: The Nineteenth Century and Beyond*, co-edited by the authors. WMLOP was initially funded by The Open University for a six-month period between January and July 2021. This pilot project enabled the authors, along with Research Collaborator Dr Laura Watson (Maynooth University) and Research Assistant Ann Grindley (The Open University), to organize two exploratory online workshops: “Women Leaders within the Contemporary Music Industries” (8 March 2021) and “Women leading Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion in Music Education and the Music Industries” (4 June 2021). The awarding of a UK Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) network grant allowed the development from WMLOP to WMLON. WMLON ran from January 2022 to November 2023. The research team was joined by Gabriella Di Laccio, founder and curator of the Donne Women in Music Foundation. WMLON organized five online workshops exploring different aspects of women's musical leadership, focused upon “Women Leaders within the Classical Music Industries”; “Women leading Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Music Education”; “Collectives and Activists: Women leading Change in Music”; “Women Leaders within the Popular Music Industries”; and “Women leading Change in Music Broadcast and Journalism”. Each event presented a panel discussion, which brought together a diverse range of women musical leaders and a practical workshop, led by an activist for change towards greater gender equity within the music industries/education. For example, the “Women Leaders within the Classical Music Industries” workshop, held on 25 March 2022, brought together a panel comprising Diana Ambache, Ella Jarman-Pinto, Deborah Keyser and Karen Power, and the afternoon workshop was facilitated by Gabriella Di Laccio. WMLON concluded with the Second International Conference on Women's Musical Leadership, and also offered a mentorship scheme for early career women musicians, music industry professionals and scholars.

New Wave Feminism in the Music Industries

There have been many waves of feminism, and depending on the research or theory the ways in which these are titled change: broadly, the first wave of feminism concerned voting and suffrage, up to the 1960s; the second wave was much more focused on repro-

ductive rights and equality with some focus on equal pay, from the 1960s to 1990s; the third wave then looked to the patriarchy and to legal reforms and to gender mainstreaming, in institutions especially; and since, a fourth wave focused on class, conflict, family violence and the intersectionalities of race, class, faith, sexuality and gender. Intersectionality is a term originated from Kimberlé Crenshaw (2014) in her recognition that her lived experience was different to the dominating narrative of former feminist discourse and which has been developed much in discussions of race, gender, faith, sexuality and so on. A focus on equality is now outdated – it has become clear that experiences are different depending on our demographic criteria, as such equity is the word to focus on – we must look to giving equitable access and opportunity. As such, WMLON's aims recognize an intersectional approach to considering gender in the music industries, in that a focus on gender alone cannot resolve discrimination which targets race, class, sexuality, faith, and other characteristics. Feminism therefore can be too limited by its link to gender. The intersectional dimension must be recognized, and applied in the work we do together to make change. Intersectionality ensures we consider positionality and these issues as interconnected rather than as silos – the hope then is for better understanding via exploration which speaks across any perceived barriers. So, we consider also the barriers not only to women, but also those barriers experienced in terms of race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, ableism, faith among others. It is perhaps no bad thing, that, as Judith Butler (1990: 2) asserted, “woman is no longer understood in stable abiding terms”. There is a will for leadership amongst women, but that appetite is often limited due to the many barriers which are actual and perceived. By speaking of women in the broadest sense (fully inclusive of transgender women), and by focusing on the intersectional context, we aim to support discussion of the different forms of leadership, the different ways in which training might take place, and the varied ways in which we can develop a peer- and co-mentoring scheme to facilitate individual development and opportunity of individual experiences. As Rhode (2017: 33) identified in exploring women and leadership in business, law and education, “women need advocates, not simply advisors”.

This remains a concern. As *Donne Women in Music* has shown in their recent reports exploring the lack of representation in concert programming (2021 and 2022), programming of classical concerts remains largely male, white and privileged. Similar research data has led to strategies such as Keychange 50:50 supported by the PRS Foundation which seeks a gender balance in concerts/festivals by 2022 (the year we launched WMLON). There is in various parts of the music industries, and beyond, a leaky pipeline: “The higher you go” as Wangari Maathai noted, “the fewer women there are” (Maathai quoted in Adichie 2014: 17). In her book exploring feminism in punk, Vivien Goldman (2019: 11) also asserts that: “Women still have no controlling say in the multinational music industry for which we earn so much”. It is notable that these claims of a lack of leadership representation in music span all forms of music industries including classical, pop, world and folk. In looking to political leadership, Lisa Pace Vetter (2010: 3) observes that: “Women find themselves torn between the need to take charge and exercise leadership, [...] and the desire to work collaboratively with others”. In the same collection of essays as Vetter, Lumsden (2010: 917) aligns the changing societal norms with the opportunities and achievements of women in the music industries, which reasserts that societal enculturation informs access, opportunities and achievements: “women have made significant

strides in Western Art music since 1800, encouraged by the changing role of women in society as a whole". Likewise, Goldman's (2019: 21) assessment of the changes in punk also align the musical developments to "a pivotal time for societal change".

The aim of our work is to inform change to ensure a wider range of voices can be represented at all levels, and so to support the training and experience, of women and others, to ensure different voices can aspire and attain positions in leadership. In referring to feminism at all, we are aware that this network then has to acknowledge that we must "face things squarely" (Sinclair 2014: 17), in ensuring to address and be aware of how women have had limited access to various parts of the music industries in a way that is systematized according to socialized practices: for example, that women who do make leadership roles will receive more negative responses than men, simply due to the perceived power and gender imbalances, and to recognize that "public platforms of leadership are often used, consciously and unconsciously, to advance this [sexist] agenda" (Sinclair 2014: 17).

Some of the urgencies of previous forms of feminist activity have died down, though not everywhere, indeed, lack of access to political and employment rights or to adequate healthcare or opportunities for education remain a reality for many women across the world, and still today American women are currently finding their rights are under attack, whilst similarly Northern Irish women face extremely restricted access to abortion. Two decades into the twenty-first century, there remain firsts for women, such as Alsop conducting the Last Night of the Proms in 2013. In musical circles, women are still struggling to achieve fair representation as conductors, as composers within concert programming, as singer/songwriters within festivals and more. Though women are well represented as music teachers, and in some forms of educational leadership, there are fewer women AR, managers, producers, songwriters and other senior figures (Hamer and Minors 2023).

Overview of Trends

The concept of leadership, in its broadest sense, has referred to leadership research and leadership models which are male, white, Western and assert often military metaphors (Sinclair 2014: 20). This is a restrictive view grounded in patriarchal, colonial language and terms. In her book, *We Should All Be Feminists*, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (2014: 30) asserts that: "We internalize ideas from our socialization", which is a useful reminder that we understand our situation via our institutionalization, within working environments, and so within the music industries, the majority representation of male leadership has informed our understanding of that industry and what that industry can be. But in following Adichie's (2014: 38) call for us to reassess these norms, and to ensure we recognize the continued need for a feminist perspective to call for change, she outlines what she has been doing, that is a suggestion to us all: "to unlearn lessons of gender [...] internalized while growing up". Joining an institution brings with it an induction process, which often includes an enculturation into an institution. Following an adaptive leadership approach though would encourage understanding of the institution, its practices, procedures and policies, but it would also ensure that a colleague and leader remains

open to new possibilities, new ways of doing things and therefore open to and critical of their own biases, in a way which is continually reflective, with check-ins for themselves to consider how their leadership practices impact those within their teams. This notion of reflective leadership within an adaptive approach is one which is encouraged as part of Aurora (a women's leadership training programme open to women working within higher education in the UK and Ireland), run by AdvanceHE. Though we recognize that mentoring schemes can only go so far, and in fact women need to be given opportunities to experience new roles, and enabled to develop, being able to demonstrate potential and not only proof of what has previously been done (Bishop 2022). These qualities of adaptive leadership have been identified in leadership research previously as those qualities most often associated with being a woman, in that a woman stereotypically nurtures, supports, encourages: "characteristics associated with women's leadership include good conflict management and interpersonal skills, being excellent listeners and showing tolerance and empathy" (Rey 2005: 5) This is limited, stereotypical and based on a metaphor and assumption of woman as mother, wife, as a carer and in a role in the home. Perhaps therefore so many assume that women would, as Rey notes, "lead from behind" (Rey 2005: 5).

Models of Leadership

Is women's leadership style different? It seems that it is, but is this actual, in practice, or is it only a stereotypical view we expect, or is it a learned experience from societal pressures? Research by Rhode (2017) and others cited here does show there are differences, and also that there is no equity in many areas leading to leadership, nor in terms of access, training, sustained career support and opportunities offered to individuals. Few women reach the senior management positions in the music industries. This has many reasons behind it – lack of representation, lack of role models, discrimination, but also societal impacts (which impact us from birth) of the imbalance in caring and parenting predominantly falling to women. But if there is a lack of support, then we need to recognize, as Rey (2005: 6) claims, that: "In hierarchical society, equality of opportunity rarely translates into women having an equal chance". What is called for is equity of opportunity and experience. Different paths are taken by people depending on their prior experiences, so the same training is not necessarily fairly applied, accessed or understood. If equity refers to a process whereby there is fairness of access, support and opportunity, resulting in a more balanced representation through impartial and inclusive recruitment and promotion strategies, then an equitable strategy and approach enables organizations, and here the music industries in particular, to suitably invest in training needs of specific groups, tailored to women, and marginalized and under-represented groups, of all kinds. If as Rey (2005: 6) and other have proposed, the different societal experience and socialization impact our opportunities then we need to ensure that "the path [women] take might be different from that taken by men".

Literature on leadership assumes and asserts that it can be taught (Rey 2005: 4), but that assumes equal access to these opportunities. It has not often tackled the fact that being given opportunities of experience means some learning through applied experi-

ence in non-formal training sessions, and that applied experience boosts confidence and can help generate resilience. Indeed, Robin James's (2015) book on pop music and feminism focusses on resilience as a way to further develop women's presence and a neoliberal approach to musical creativity. At present in the UK and Ireland there are burgeoning training programs to help diversify leadership and to find equitable ways to ensure experiences afforded some throughout their education experience is now afforded to all, to readdress the balance; the Aurora Leadership program aims "to take positive action to address the under-representation of women in leadership positions in the sector" (2022). Higher Education Charter Marks in the UK, such as Athena Swan and the Race Equality Charter, ensure that institutions create action plans to mobilize change, and therefore support these action plans with additional training in-house. But that does not in fact help those yet to join the career networks to access such experiences and understanding: this is one of the many reasons why WMLON is open to all and free of charge, run online, to ensure the removal of travel, the need for budget and the need to be within an institution, to engage those with aspirations, those hoping to have an open dialogue about what might be done and those simply looking for role models or for ideas.

Leadership is a position of power, but a position not the same as "management" in the traditional sense of imposing activities, but one whereby someone can develop their influence, to facilitate others, to support, to engender trust and respect, to share values, to co-create a shared ethos and philosophy, to co-construct and develop an industry/company together. As such the emphasis can be on the process of leadership; how leaders perform in their role, working with their colleagues, rather than, a leader being synonymous with management and perhaps stereotypes of control. Adaptive leadership models are required to ensure that effective leadership is developed (Sinclair 2014: 19). Indeed, Susan Carroll's seminal work on political leadership defines an effective leader in similar terms to that of a coach or mentor: "one who empowers others to act in their own interests" not those imposed, but those they share with a team (Carroll 1984: 142).

In redefining leadership models and seeking to explore what women's leadership has been and might be, we focus on processes of leadership: we seek to support the empowerment of individuals, we seek to develop new relationships within our industry via supporting the field with workshops with time for sharing experiences and talking through the barriers that have been experienced and a mentoring scheme whereby opportunities for both mentor and mentee are advertised openly to the wider sector.

But what is optimal leadership? Though this will have many answers, depending on the situation, it is worth aspiring to achieve this. Transformational adaptive leadership seems to be one such way forward whereby we in the music industries co-create a new collective team ethos in our specific institutions. This means freelancers, which are the majority of our industry, need to be able to do this within sector unions as well. Indeed, recent work by Rhode (2017: 5) asserts that this approach is a women's approach to leadership: "Women tend to use a transformational style because it relies on skills associated with women, and because more autocratic approaches are viewed as less attractive in women than in men". Women's musical leadership therefore explores the particular practices women have taken which are often different, whether it be nurturing and facilitating activities, or in terms of leading from the front as in advocacy and activism, as well as leading from behind, in the fields of education (see Hamer and Minors 2023). Hamer's

and Minors's volume on women's musical leadership is the first in the field to explore the diverse range of practices across history, in conducting, in the music industries, within education, as well as activism and advocacy.

Focus on the individual is necessary to support confidence building, resilience development and support for access to the industries in the first place. To diversify leadership, to ensure a fair representation of voices at all levels, requires distributed leadership.

Interventions and Intersectionalities: Networks, Collectives, Grassroots

It is no surprise that in 2022 the focus for International Women's Day was #BreakingtheBias. WMLON shares the definition of leadership with Keohane's (2020: 236) work on women and power in leadership: "Leaders define or clarify goals for a group of individuals and bring together the energies of members of that group to pursue those goals". We are stepping forward to make change due to our collective experiences and those we have witnessed and researched. A call to arms (to borrow military metaphors) comes too from Goldman (2019: 53): "We must make a place in a market manipulated to pander to the clichéd male gaze". Her model for change is to "break" current practice (similar to the 2022 International Women's Day theme), to "construct" new methods, to "position" women in a new way (2019: 53). Thereby, feminism, women's work in music, and our network speak to the ethos of punk, and we borrow Goldman's (2019: 183) assertive words to iterate this: "Making things happen wherever you are, cleverly circumventing obstacles based on your class, gender, race—that is also punk's heartbeat".

WMLON is not the only network/collective seeking to achieve change. *The Routledge Companion to Women and Musical Leadership: The Nineteenth Century and Beyond* co-edited by the present authors, includes Part 6, dedicated to "Advocacy: Collectives, and Grassroots Activism", which covers plenty of such examples. Notable is the work of Sounding the Feminist in Ireland, who seek to "promot[e] and publicis[e] the creative work of female musicians". Coming together to share experiences, Gender Relations in New Music (GRiNM) and the Yorkshire Sound Women Network (YSWN) share their processes of activism and organizational change through creating and affording experiences for women in training and in live events, there are far too many to list here in fact.

WMLON is aspiring to "do better", to encourage equitable access, equitable opportunity, and equitable support for all, to ensure that, as Adichie (2014: 48) closes her book: "All of us [...] must do better". As educators, advocates, musicians and authors, WMLON is continuing the work of many prior feminists in this wave by not limiting the approach to complaining, or describing the problems and limitations faced, but by trying to foster change through mentorship, education, dialogue, in a way in which we recognize and harness the intersectionality of our identities, which we aspire to take beyond some historical forms of feminism, which as noted by Becky Thompson (2002: 336–60) in her research on multiracial feminism, has often been largely white and Western. In moving forward with our network, we seek to rephrase the 1972 call from the *Mouvement de Libération des Femmes* and Simone de Beauvoir's response to this call for equity (Walters 2005: 98–9), in taking up the baton ourselves into our own hands to work towards ensuring we move

beyond equality toward an equitable approach to ensuring access, training, support and inclusion for all musicians, to ensuring an equitable destiny for the music industries.

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