DR RICHARD PERKS

PHONE: +447763600726 • EMAIL: r_perks@hotmail.com

As a prize-winning performer, composer, musicologist and educator, I exhibit diverse musical interests that inform my teaching and research. Areas of expertise include popular music practice, improvisation, intercultural collaboration, contemporary composition and guitar-focused musicology/analysis. I am recognised as one of Europe's leading exponents of the fretless electric guitar and have performed all over the world.

Education

Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education, University of Kent	2018 – 2019
PhD. Music, Brunel University of London (*Combining Musical Identities through Composition and Improvisation*)	2009 – 2013
MMus. Contemporary Music, Brunel University of London (Merit)	2007 – 2009
BMus. Popular Music Performance, London College of Music/Guitar Institute (First Class Hons.)	2003 – 2006
BSc. Mathematics, University of Southampton (First Class Hons.)	2000 – 2003
Open College Network (level 4 courses): Songwriting (Dist.); Studio & Production Skills (Dist.)	1999 – 2000

Awards and Recognition

Conferred as Professor of Music Performance, Institute of Contemporary Music Performance (2024)

Winner of First Prize in 7th International Microtonal Guitar Competition, Microtonal Guitar Institute/Istanbul Technical University (2023)

Winner of Second Prize in 6th International Microtonal Guitar Competition, Microtonal Guitar Institute/Istanbul Technical University (2022)

Humanities Faculty Teaching Prize Winner (First Prize), University of Kent (2018)
(for: *The Integration of Peer-Review, Reflective Feedback, and Reflexivity into the Teaching and Assessment of Music Performance*)

Further Accreditations/Esteem Indicators

Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (2019)

AdvanceHE: Professional Development Course for External Examiners (2019)

Awarded full scholarship to attend Advanced Songwriting Course, led by Ray Davies (*The Kinks*), at Dartington International Summer School (2012)

Professional Practice (incl. selected commercial live performances/tours and studio recordings)

- International performance portfolio; one of the world's leading exponents of the fretless electric guitar; regular delivery of international workshops, masterclasses and concerts promoting the fretless electric guitar, and performing original music; debut album, *Imposition* (2009), received critical acclaim (Unfretted; Music Orbit); award-winning composer; various works have been performed globally.
- Considerable live, studio and theatre experience in the commercial industry; have toured extensively throughout Europe, North America, Asia, and the Middle East as a session musician (see below).
- Live tours/performances with internationally renowned artists (e.g. Ali Azimi, Niaz Nawab, Kamyar, Matti Caspi, Jonathan Ansell, The Twelve Tenors, Dick Heckstall-Smith, Ed Jones, Andrew Linham).
- Performances at world-class venues include: O2 Shepherd's Bush Empire (London), El Ray Theatre (LA), Slims (San Francisco), The Mod Club (Toronto), Le Grande Sport (Monte Carlo), New Morning (Paris).
- International festival performances include: Dutch Fretless Guitar Festivals VIII & IX (Netherlands), Montreux Jazz Festival (Switzerland), North Sea Jazz Festival (Netherlands), Tabestoon (Canada), Eldfesten (Sweden), Dunestock (Qatar).
- Professional recording sessions include: BBC TV, Manoto TV, KONK, RAK, Metropolis Studios, Angel Studios.
- In demand, as professional guitarist; currently tour/perform with *vlookup Trio* and the *Andrew Linham Jazz Orchestra*, as well as play much contemporary, experimental, improvised and World music.

- Instruments played professionally: Guitar (fretless, electric, acoustic and classical), electric bass guitar, and voice. Basic proficiency in: drum kit, keyboards, oud, Turkish bağlama, and Persian setar. Grade 8 Certificates: Electric Guitar (*Trinity/Rockschool* – Dist.), Electric Bass Guitar (*Trinity/Rockschool* – Merit), Theory of Music (*ABRSM*).
- [Album] Rich Perks & Buzz Gravelle (2024), *Lucid Dream – Music for Fretless Guitars* (commercially released).
- [Album] Ali Azimi (2019), *Of Love and Other Evils* (commercially released).
- [Album] Andrew Linham Jazz Orchestra (2018), *Weapons of Mass Distraction* (commercially released).
- [World Tour] Ali Azimi (2016/17), *Til Glory Finds Us*. Session guitarist; 27 cities globally (up to 35,000-seat venues).
- [Album] Ali Azimi (2016), *Til Glory Finds Us* (commercially released).
- [World Tour] Ali Azimi and the Need (2014/15), *Mr. Mean*. Session guitarist; 17 cities globally.
- [Album] Ali Azimi and The Need. (2014), *Mr. Mean* (commercially released).

Peer-Reviewed Publications

[Book: Co-edited Volume] Perks, R. and Walduck, J. (Forthcoming, 2028), *Composition and Improvisation: Combinations, Intersections and Liminal Spaces* (Routledge: under contract).

[Book: Co-edited Volume] Perks, R. and McGrath, J. (Forthcoming, 2026/7), *Innovative Contemporary Guitar: Creativity and Technique* (Bloomsbury Academic: under contract).

[Book: Co-edited Volume] Perks, R. and McGrath, J. (2023), *21st Century Guitar: Evolutions and Augmentations* (Bloomsbury Academic).

[Book Chapter] Perks, R. and McGrath, J. (2023), 'Introduction', in Richard Perks and John McGrath (eds), *21st Century Guitar: Evolutions and Augmentations* (Bloomsbury Academic).

[Book Chapter] Perks, R. (2023), 'The Expanding Fretless Guitarscape: Practice and Progress', in Richard Perks and John McGrath (eds), *21st Century Guitar: Evolutions and Augmentations* (Bloomsbury Academic).

[Book Chapter] Perks, R. (2023), 'Transforming the Microtonal Fingerboard: 'Small' Frets, LEGO and Robots: Interview with Tolgahan Çoğulu', in Richard Perks and John McGrath (eds), *21st Century Guitar: Evolutions and Augmentations* (Bloomsbury Academic).

[Book Chapter] Perks, R. (2023), 'Touching the Apple without Gloves: Interview with Cenk Erdoğan', in Richard Perks and John McGrath (eds), *21st Century Guitar: Evolutions and Augmentations* (Bloomsbury Academic).

[Book Chapter] Perks, R. (2023), 'I Should Have Just Learned How to Play the Organ: Interview with Charlie Hunter', in Richard Perks and John McGrath (eds), *21st Century Guitar: Evolutions and Augmentations* (Bloomsbury Academic).

[Book Chapter] Perks, R. (2022), 'David Gilmour – Defining the "Melodic" Guitarist', in Christopher Hart and Simon Morrison (eds), *The Routledge Handbook of Pink Floyd* (Routledge).

[Journal Article] Perks, R. (Dec, 2021), 'Strung Together: Realizing Music-Cultural Hybridity within a Limited Time Frame', in *Music and Practice, vol. 9*.

[Journal Article] Perks, R. (Apr, 2019), 'Fretless Architecture: Towards the Development of Original Techniques and Musical Notation Specific to the Fretless Electric Guitar', in *Music and Practice, New Perspectives on Technique and Practice, vol. 4*.

Invited Papers and Talks

[Guest Lecture-recital] Perks, R. (Sept, 2023), 'The Fretless Electric Guitar: Affordance and Creativity', at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, US. (120 mins)

[Guest Talk] Perks, R. (Mar, 2023), 'The Fretless Electric Guitar: Affordance and Creativity', Sir John Manduell Research Forum Series, Royal Northern College of Music, UK. (90 mins; published proceedings)

[Panel Chair] Perks, R. (Oct, 2022), '*21st Century Guitar*: Book Panel Discussion', at 4th Annual Conference, International Guitar Research Centre, University of Surrey, UK. (90 minutes)

[Guest Lecture-recital] Perks, R. (Mar, 2022), 'The Fretless Electric Guitar: Compositional and Performance Possibilities', at Brunel University London, UK. (120 mins)

[Conference Roundtable] Perks, R. (Mar, 2021), 'Improvisation', at The 21st Century Guitar – Unconventional Approaches to Performance, Composition and Research, University NOVA de Lisbona, Portugal. (60 minutes; online)

[Guest Lecture] Perks, R. (May, 2020), 'Strung Together: A Practical Exploration of Music-Cultural Hybridity, Interaction, and Collaboration', Postgraduate Research Forum, Institute of Contemporary Music Performance, London, UK. (120 minutes)

[Guest Lecture-recital] Perks, R. (Nov, 2019), 'Fretless Architecture: The Expansion of Improvisatory Techniques and Sound-Palette Specific to Fretless Electric Guitar', at Istanbul Technical University, Turkey. (60 mins)

Relevant Conference Papers and Lecture Recitals

[Paper] Perks, R. (Jul, 2025), 'Democratising Creativity: Musical Exploration through Guitar Modification', at The Guitar in Popular Music, Canterbury Christ Church University, UK. (40 minutes)

[Paper] Perks, R. (Jun, 2025), 'Inaugurating a Vibrant Research Culture within Independent HE Providers', at Research Symposium 2025: Enablers and Inhibitors of Thriving Research Cultures, AdvanceHE, UK. (30 minutes; online, published proceedings)

[Paper] Perks, R. (Jul, 2024), 'David Gilmour: Defining the "Melodic" Guitarist', at The Electric Guitar in Popular Music, Canterbury Christ Church University, UK. (40 minutes)

[Paper] Williams, T. and Perks, R. (Mar, 2021), '"Outlier" Taxonomies and Codifications of Jazz Guitar Vocabulary', at The 21st Century Guitar – Unconventional Approaches to Performance, Composition and Research, University NOVA de Lisbona, Portugal. (30 minutes; online, published proceedings)

[Lecture-recital] Perks, R. (Mar, 2021), 'Extended Techniques and Expanded Sound-Palette Specific to the Fretless Electric Guitar', at The Improviser's Experience: Knowledge, Methodologies, Communication, Royal Musical Association and University of Huddersfield, UK (20 minutes; online, published proceedings)

[Paper] Williams, T. and Perks, R. (Jan, 2021), 'Lost Vocabulary Recovered: Applications for Practice and Pedagogy', at 2nd Conference of the International Network for Artistic Research in Jazz, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, UK. (20 minutes; online, published proceedings)

[Lecture-recital] Perks, R. (July, 2019), 'Fretless Architecture: The Expansion of Improvisatory Techniques and Sound-Palette Specific to Fretless Electric Guitar', at Improvisation and the Guitar, The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts, Hong Kong. (45 minutes)

[Paper] Perks, R. (March, 2019), 'Strung Together: A Practical Exploration of Music-Cultural Hybridity, Interaction, and Collaboration', at Hybridity in Arts, University of Malta, Malta. (25 minutes)

[Paper] Perks, R. (Sept, 2018), 'Strung Together: Interactions of Musical Cultures and Their Effects on Collaborative Creativity', at Research in Music Performance, Institute of Contemporary Music Performance, London, UK. (25 minutes)

[Lecture-recital] Perks, R. (March, 2016), 'Fretless Architecture: An Exploration of the Fretless Electric Guitar', at 2nd Annual Conference, International Guitar Research Centre, University of Surrey, UK. (45 minutes)

Performances (Practice Research)

[Concert] Perks, R., Hall, A., and Atherton, T. (Dec, 2022), *vLookup Trio*, Dutch Fretless Guitar Festival IX (Popradar, NL).

[Solo Concert] Perks, R. (Nov, 2019), Performance of 'Improweb MMXIX' for solo fretless electric guitar (+ effects), composed by Perks, R. (Istanbul Technical University, Turkey).

[Solo Concert] Perks, R. (July, 2019), Premier performance of 'Improweb MMXIX' for solo fretless electric guitar, composed by Perks, R. (The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts, Hong Kong).

[Concert Series] Perks, R., Hall, A., and Atherton, T. (May, 2019), *vLookup Trio*, Performance Series. Concerts throughout UK, Belgium, and Netherlands, incl. Dutch Fretless Guitar Festival VIII (Q-Factory, NL).

[Concert] Perks, R. (Principal Investigator), Manhoobi, S., Minooei, F., Zedan, F., and Osman, R. (Sept, 2017), 'Strung Together: A Night of World Music Improvisation'. Performance project, commissioned by Diaspora Arts Connection. (African American Art & Culture Complex, San Francisco, US).

[Solo Concert] Perks, R. (March, 2016), 'Fretless Architecture: An Exploration of the Fretless Electric Guitar': Including premier performance of Divisions 2 for solo fretless electric guitar, composed by Hall, A. (International Guitar Research Centre, University of Surrey, UK).

[Concert] Perks, R., Hall, A., and Atherton, T. (2015), *vLookup Trio*: Performance. (Colchester Arts Centre, UK).

[Solo Concert] Perks, R. (2015), 'Fretless Architecture: An Exploration of the Fretless Electric Guitar'. Premier performance(s) of Turbulence, composed by Usher, J.; Divisions, composed by Hall, A.; Sinner, composed by Trotter, J.; Elephants, composed by Maguire, P.; Rhapsody, composed by Minshew, T. – (Colchester Arts Centre, UK).

Compositions (Practice Research)

[Album] Perks, R. & Gravelle, B. (2024), *Lucid Dream – Music for Fretless Guitars* (commercially released).

[Competition] Perks, R. (2023), *Curse of The Sandman* for solo microtonal guitar + electronic effects. Premiered by Perks, R. Winner of First Prize in 7th International Microtonal Guitar Competition 2023 (Microtonal Guitar Institute; Istanbul Technical University).

[Competition] Perks, R. (2022), *Slap 19* for solo microtonal classical guitar. Premiered by Perks, R. Winner of Second Prize in 6th International Microtonal Guitar Competition 2022 (Microtonal Guitar Institute; Istanbul Technical University).

[Premier] Perks, R. (2019), *Improweb MMXIX* for solo fretless electric guitar (+ effects). Premiered by Perks, R. (The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts, Hong Kong).

[CD] Perks, R. (2016), *Jigsaw #4* for Piano and Fender Rhodes, commissioned by Kate Halsall (Miniturised Concertos | Maché, Metier Records).

[Premier] Perks, R. (2013), *Serial Killer* for solo bass clarinet. Premiered by Jackson, T. (Brunel University, London, UK).

[Premier] Perks, R. (2012), *Dastgah Piece #5* for fretless electric guitar, Tar, live electronics, clarinet, and percussion. Premiered by Perks, R., Zarandi, I., Peake, M., Jackson, T., and Nourbakhsh, A. (Brunel University, London, UK).

[Double-Premier] Perks, R. (2012). *(CoMA) Chameleon*, for mixed ensemble, commissioned by Usher, J. and CoMA East. Double-Premiered by CoMA East (Colchester Arts Centre, UK) and *vLookup* (Brunel University).

[Premier] Perks, R. (2011), *Primal Soup* for small ensemble. Premiered by Perks, R., Williams, E., Peake, M., Finlayson, S. and Brown, J. (Brunel University, UK).

[Premier] Perks, R. (2011), *Box of Serial* for solo flute, selected from *Primavera* international call for scores by Colchester New Music. Premiered by Ruffer, N. (Colchester Arts Centre, UK).

[CD] Perks, R. (2009), *Imposition* (commercially released).

Successful Funding Applications (Research/Knowledge Exchange/Enterprise)

Higher Education Innovation Funding (HEIF), Research England/OfS. Application submitted by the Academy of Contemporary Music (compiled by the Research, Development and Knowledge Exchange Committee). Annual funding awarded: £650,000–1,000,000 per annum (Sept 2025–present)

'Musical Migration: Establishing New Paradigms for Intercultural Music-making' (International Collaborative Research Project) | Migration and Movement – Signature Research Theme, Research and Engagement Award, University of Kent, £3,000 (Jan, 2022)

'AR 'scapes: Voices from the Concrete Barges' (Multi-disciplinary Collaborative Research Project), Creative Estuary/Arts Council England, £6,000 (Dec, 2021)

Research and Innovation Funding Award, University of Kent, £500 (Sept, 2021)

Erasmus Staff Mobility Funding, via University of Kent, c. £1500 (Nov, 2019)

Research Travel Bursary, University of Kent, £1,250 (July, 2019)

Research 'Seed Funding' Grant, Institute of Contemporary Music Performance, £500 (July, 2019)

Research Project Funding Award, Faculty of Humanities, University of Kent, £1,987.50 (July, 2019)

'Strung Together' (International Performance Project), Diaspora Arts Connection (US), $10,000 (Sept, 2017)

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Editorial Roles, Peer Review and Memberships

Series Editor (Routledge) – *Practice Research in Music* (2026 – Present)

Peer Reviewer (Routledge) – Various book proposals and manuscripts (2025 – Present)

Honorary Associate (Music), University of Kent (UK) (2024 – Present)

Jury Member, International Microtonal Guitar Competition, Microtonal Guitar Institute (TR) (2024 – Present)

Member of Editorial Board, Peer review, Journal of Popular Music Education (US) (2020 – Present)

Artistic Committee Member, The 21st Century Guitar – Unconventional Approaches to Performance, Composition and Research (Universidade NOVA de Lisbona, Portugal) (2020 – Present)

External Examiner/Advisory/Consultancy Roles

External Examiner, PhD Thesis, The Electric Guitar in Contemporary Art Music (Daniel Brew), The Open University, UK (May, 2026)

External Consultant, PhD/AAD (PGR/Level 8) validation process, Royal Northern College of Music, UK (Mar, 2026)

External Examiner, PhD, Music Composition – Makam/Fretless Electric Guitar (Ataman Kınış), University of Surrey, UK (Apr, 2025)

External Examiner, BA Music and BA Music (Production), Brunel University of London, UK (2022 – 2026)

External Examiner, BA Music and Sound/FdA Music and Sound, University of West London, UK (2020 – 2024)

External Examiner, PhD Thesis, Improvisatory Praxis – Jazz Guitar (Greg Scott), Australian National University, Australia (Feb, 2024)

External Examiner, MPhil Thesis, Music Performance and Praxis (Bruce Reid), University of Newcastle, Australia (Mar, 2023)

External Advisor, BA Music (Production), course review/approval process, Brunel University London, UK (June, 2020)

External Examiner, PhD, Music Composition (Stuart McCallum), University of Hull, UK (March, 2020)

External Assessor (Guitar), MA Popular Music, Leeds Conservatoire, UK (2019 – 2022)

External Assessor (Guitar), BA Popular Music, Leeds Conservatoire, UK (2018 – 2022)

External Advisor, BA & MA Music and Sound, course validation process, University of West London, UK (2019)

External Consultant, BA Music Performance/Production, development of teaching materials, Open University, UK (2018)

Leadership Roles

Associate Dean of Research and Scholarship, Academy of Contemporary Music (2024 – Present)

Director of Performance, Department of Music and Audio Technology, University of Kent (2020 – 2024)

Academic School Liaison Officer, School of Arts, University of Kent (2019 – 2021)
(Faculty-level quality assurance role: overseeing Kent-accredited partner college HE Arts provision for all Arts subjects)

Director of Outreach, Department of Music and Audio Technology, University of Kent (2017 – 2020)

Deputy Admissions Officer, Department of Music and Audio Technology, University of Kent (2017 – 2023)

Module Leader, Institute of Contemporary Music Performance (2017 – 2020)
(Structure and designing of module content; overseeing delivery and managing of fifteen tutors)

Programme/Course Design

MMus Music Performance, Institute of Contemporary Music Performance (2024)
(Integral role in programme design and QA approval process)

BMus Music, Performance and Production, Department of Music and Audio Technology, University of Kent (2017)
(Integral role in Music Performance pathway design and QA approval process)

Employment History

Academy of Contemporary Music	**Associate Dean of Research and Scholarship (/Professor of Music) (0.6FTE)** [Leading all Research and Scholarship strategies/initiatives; HEIF funding; Coordinating pilot REF submission; International conference curation; staff CPD etc.]	2024 – Present
Institute of Contemporary Music Performance	**Professor of Music Performance (HPL)** [Consultant; Teaching on BMus and MMus (levels 4–7); Research, Scholarship and Professional Practice committee member]	2016 – Present
University of Kent	**Senior Lecturer in Music Performance (1.0 FTE)** **Director of Performance** [Education and Research contract; Academic Publications; Practice-led research; Composition; REF preparation; PhD supervision and examination etc.]	2014 – 2024
Brunel University of London	**Associate Lecturer (Guitar) (HPL)**	2013 – 2018
Brunel University of London	**Associate Lecturer in Music (HPL)**	2011 – 2018
Robert Clack School	**Lecturer (A level Music Technology)**	2010 – 2012
Havering Music Service	**Peripatetic Guitar Teacher**	2007 – 2015
Barking and Dagenham Music Service	**Peripatetic Guitar/Drum Kit Teacher**	2007 – 2015
International Centre for Music, Doha, Qatar	**Head of Guitar (1.0 FTE)**	2006 – 2007