TEACHING MUSIC PERFORMANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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EXPLORING THE POTENTIAL OF ARTISTIC RESEARCH

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## PART II

## NOVEL APPROACHES TO TEACHING INTERPRETATION AND PERFORMANCE

## Introduction to Part II

## Gilvano Dalagna

How can musical interpretation be taught in a way that develops the lifelong skill of critical thinking and a reflective methodology built on artistic research? Musical interpretation is a core element of performance teaching in European HEIs, and it is a crucial outcome of learning programmes. It has, moreover, been central to artists whose research is developed and disseminated within the art world and, so, whose practice requires regular and insider reflection. Recent studies have suggested that musical interpretation is not negotiated and that students are responsible for developing their own artistic voice. However, the case studies in Part III of this book show how much the curriculum can support the development of the student voice when this is central to the design of the curriculum. The position of the student as apprentice is a consequence of a traditional pedagogical approach that developed in the nineteenth century and still informs teaching and learning practices. In this master-apprentice model, the role of the instructor is like that of the guru who passes on his or her own crafts and skills without any sense of co-creation or negotiation.

Part II of this volume shares four case studies that explore an alternative pedagogical perspective on music performance and musical interpretation, discussing and reconfiguring the master-apprentice approach. These four chapters informed the development of the REACT model, presented in the Introduction of this book. They provide insights and examples of how the topics and the spheres can be implemented. Inevitably, the chapters here presented are essentially focused on the spheres of contextualizing and exploring 'in' the model. The four case studies exemplify how

students can be taught to address their subjectivity (*contextualizing*) and how to investigate it through sources and materials to develop their artistic voice (*exploring*). This is crucial for negotiating tradition and innovation when developing new practices that will reconfigure conceptual models. These chapters also show how teaching and learning can go beyond the master-apprentice approach and embrace improvisation, collaboration, and composition.

The case studies reported here were developed in two different countries, Norway and the UK, by expert performers and educators with extensive teaching experience in higher music education. Starting with the Norwegian context, Mariam Kharatyan draws on her experience of artistic research as a classically trained pianist, in Chapter 7, to explore pedagogical strategies based on (re)introducing improvisation in the teaching and learning of classical music performance. Turning to the UK context, Robert Sholl's Chapter 5 describes a hands-on approach to the teaching and learning of counterpoint, through improvisation and composition. Hereby, his chapter provides an example of Paul Craenen's claim, with reference to the design of master's studies in music performance, that

artistic research suggests a potential to transcend the practice-theory dichotomy which we may still encounter in the way courses such as music history, music theory, aesthetics, and all kinds of optional courses are offered separately from the main subject of study.<sup>1</sup>

As both improvisation and composition are critical to the notion of collaboration and collaborative learning, Part II includes two further chapters that address these issues through case studies conducted in the UK. In Chapter 6, Jacob-Thompson Bell explores Critical Response Process (CRP) to expand models of individual studentcentred learning to benefit from the 'distributive' agency in a classroom, with specific focus on performing arts in a conservatoire setting. Richard Fay, Daniel Mawson, and Nahielly Palacios focus in Chapter 8 on the reflective performer practices embedded in the Klezmer Ensemble Performance (KEP) module at The University of Manchester, UK. These authors introduce a reflective-performer framework into their klezmer ensemble and examine the resulting texts generated to accompany their assessed performance, that is, the reflective texts through which they situate their informed performance intentions. These two chapters explore further the notions of critical thinking, inclusivity, and equity, which are central to the sphere *contextualizing* in the artistic research-based approach proposed by the REACT consortium, representing practical examples of how to integrate these in HEIs.

We hope the readers find inspiration in these four chapters for how artistic researchbased learning can be adapted and explored in different pedagogical settings—those in which the teacher is looking beyond the master-apprentice approach. The practices discussed here may play an important role in promoting a respectful pedagogical experience, which is a fundamental pillar in students' search for their artistic voice.

<sup>1</sup> Paul Craenen, 'Artistic research as an integrative force. A critical look at the role of master's research at Dutch conservatoires', FORUM+, 27.1 (2020), 45–55, https://doi.org/10.5117/FORUM2020.1.CRAE