

## Artistic-reflective project December 2004 NNC/RC + GSMD

Date	time	What
Mon. 6/12	14.00-14.45	Introduction orientation by Rineke Smilde and Bindert Posthuma, plenary discussion lead by Chris Fictoor
	14.45-15.30	Discussion in groups lead by mentors Rineke Smilde, Bindert Posthuma, Marinus Verkuil and Peter Mak
	16.00-16.45	Plenary discussion lead by Chris Fictoor
Tue. 7/12	10.00-11.00	Rehearsal in groups for workshops; lead by workshopleaders (ws-leaders)
	11.00-11.30	Information primary school De Linde
	11.30-12.30	Rehearsal in groups for workshops; lead by ws-leaders
	13.30-14.00	Information nursing home Coendershof
	14.00-17.00	Rehearsal in groups for workshops; lead by ws-leaders
Wed. 8/12	10.00-12.30	Rehearsal in groups for workshops; lead by ws-leaders
	13.30-17.00	Rehearsal in groups for workshops; lead by ws-leaders; in-between evaluation lead by mentor + ws-leader
Thurs. 9/12	10.30-10.15	Workshop primary school Haren; group 3+4 perform, group 1+2 observe + group improvisation with students and children, lead by Sean Gregory.
	11.15-11.40	Conversation with pupils and teachers primary school
	12.00-14.00	Lunch break
	15.00-15.30	Workshop nursing home + Group improvisation students and inhabitants
	15.30-16.00	Conversation with inhabitants nursing home
Fri. 10/12	11.00-12.00	Evaluation orientation week in groups: students, ws-leaders, mentors
	12.00-12.30	Plenary evaluation lead by Sean Gregory and Bindert Posthuma
	13.00- 13.30	Performance lead by Sean in hall NNC
	15.00-17.00	Discussion orientation on the profession "Developing your Personal Pathway" lead by Peter Renshaw

### Monday December 6:

#### **Introduction orientation by Rineke Smilde and Bindert Posthuma, plenary discussion lead by Chris Fictoor:**

In this kick off of the project the students were explained shortly what they were going to do for the rest of the week and what the backgrounds of the project were. Chris Fictoor set out his personal pathway in his music career. Why he does what he does now, how he got there and which choices he made.

#### **Discussion in groups lead by mentors Rineke Smilde, Bindert Posthuma, Marinus Verkuil and Peter Mak:**

The aim was getting to know each other in your group. Next to this there was a form with five questions the students had to fill in: Why is music important for you?; Why do you want to make a living out of music?; What are the conditions of your future professional situation to get satisfaction out of it?; Is there any kind of profession in music you exclude at this moment and why?; What do you want to mean for other people as a musician?

After answering these questions there was a short discussion about the answers. Most students find music important (study music) because it is their passion, their way of life, everything else is a second choice. Music gives them an identity (expressing themselves). The answers on the second question were mostly the same. Concerning the third question, the answers were mostly about sharing inspiration together, freedom, communication and matter to the world. Some students wanted to exclude some kinds of profession in music (e.g. teaching), but most students couldn't answer that question specifically (yet). The meaning of music to other people was assumed to be comfort, expression, communication, universal language (speaking without words), healing, freedom, "helps save the world". Some students found it (yet) hard to think about the meaning of music for a person other than themselves.

#### **Plenary discussion lead by Chris Fictoor:**

Chris Fictoor talked with the students about the answers they gave on the five questions and how those answers relate to each other. After this a discussion followed about the meaning of music. Does music have a meaning? What is the definition of meaning? Which parties are involved (piece (composer); player(s); context; listener(s))? The last part of the meeting was about: When am I a professional? Each student had his/her own answer to this question, e.g. The way that you approach music; If it gives you fulfillment; When you are earning (enough) money with it; If you can beat your own teacher; When you have a diploma)

## **Tuesday December 7:**

### **Rehearsal in groups for workshops; lead by workshop leaders:**

The morning started plenary in the big hall. The workshop leaders introduced themselves to the students and a warming up exercise took place (breaking the ice). After this the big group split up in their four mixed groups (mixed as in departments: jazz, classical, teaching and conducting; and instruments) and started working on their improvisation-based composition. Each group was lead by one or two workshop leaders. The purpose was to make a composition of app. 10 minutes. While making this piece the students had to make sure to adjust it to the context (audience and environment) they were going to perform it in.

### **Information Primary School De Linde:**

Hans Wijma, teacher and interim Head of the primary school, came to visit the students (and workshop leaders) to inform them about the children they were going to perform to. About 50 children varying in age between 9 and 12 years would attend the performance on Thursday. Music has a special place in the school's curriculum. From the age of four children learn to sing and to listen to music (various styles). Much emphasis is laid on personal musical development of the children. The school has various instruments: percussion, Orff, and a brand new piano. Every morning at 8.30 the children can enter in free playing sessions. Tips for the performers: Be enthusiastic, show your enthusiasm while playing. Most children like and listen to pop music. It is good if the children are confronted with music styles they are not acquainted with. There are enough instruments for the children to join the students in music making.

### **Rehearsal in groups for workshops; lead by workshop leaders:**

Continuation of the creating process of the pieces.

### **Information Nursing Nome Coendershof:**

Mrs. Anne de Boer, activities coach of the Nursing home De Coendershof visited the students to tell about the people they were going to perform to.

There are four categories of clients (not to call patients): clients for revalidation (they stay for a short time and go home); clients with severe somatic problems (physical limitations: they need help with dressing, feeding etc.); double care clients (they have mental as well as physical limitations); psycho-geriatric patients who have various kinds of dementia. The students could expect their audience to have problems with hearing and vision; unilateral paralysis; problems with locomotion and mobility (many clients sit in a wheel chair); disorders in cognitive and emotional control.

The musical taste of the clients is diverse. Most of them are susceptible to the music they heard in their youth. They are not always capable in expressing their appreciation to the music and the musicians as most people do (applauding for instance) because of limited motor functioning.

In the home there is no music therapy. Every Thursday morning there is the possibility of listening to classical music. Sometimes there are concerts: piano music, choir, accordion. The nursing home is of a Christian signature.

### **Rehearsal in groups for workshops; lead by workshop leaders:**

Continuation of the creating process of the pieces. All the groups now had more information about their audience and could start adjusting the piece to the contexts.

### **Wednesday December 8:**

The whole day was dedicated to creating the compositions. In the afternoon the groups assembled with their mentors and workshop leaders to evaluate the process of making the piece and to prepare the conversations they were going to have with their audience.

#### **Group 1 and 2:**

The students were enthusiastic about the way they were creating a composition. It was difficult to do though. There were many ideas, many of them coming from the workshop leaders. The balance between students who came forward with many ideas and actually wished the workshop leaders to "hold back" and on the other hand of students who actually wished the workshop leaders to take the lead was difficult to keep. Everybody agreed that it is a challenge to work with so many different instruments and different backgrounds (jazz/classical/cultures etc.). They all got to know each other musically and socially. The students also experienced the freedom of having no score and being able to make their own musical decisions. Confidence and trust were found very important, as important as having actually skills for improvisation.

#### **Preparing questions for the nursing home:**

The main thing the students wanted to find out is how the audience felt about their music. At the heart of it was that they have a certain idea and perception of the audience for who they develop their composition. In how far does this match?

Do they have the right idea about what appeals to their audience? It should be: simple, friendly, peaceful.

The two groups established 12 Dutch speaking students who would talk in pairs at six tables with inhabitants of the nursing home.

#### **Preparing questions for the primary school:**

The students made a list drew up a list of questions that had both musical and generic contents:

##### Musical:

Did you like the music? What parts did/ didn't you like? Why? Which instruments did you like? Why? Did you miss any instrument in the ensembles? Did you notice things about the form of the piece? Did you hear some little melodies come back again? What are your favorite instruments? Do you play an instrument yourself? What is your favorite musical style? Can you imagine an event, or a person that you hear in the music (meaning!)? What happens? Is there a particular instrument that resembles to a person, a feeling?

##### Generic:

Did you like playing together (with us)? Making music is a form of communication: did we have a good conversation? Would you like to have me as you music teacher? What do you want to happen with this project? Would you like a follow-up in your school? What kind of feelings did you experience during the music?

Remarks made by students, workshop leaders and mentor: It is important to ask concrete questions to the children; Don't underestimate children; It is not necessary to compose your questions in detail in advance, but it is good to think in a direction.

### **Thursday December 9:**

This morning group 3 and 4 were going to perform their compositions to the children of the primary school "De Linde" in Haren. The performance was introduced by a student from the organisation group, Tobias Nijboer. Group 1 and 2 observed the performance. At the end of the performance a collaborative workshop for the children and the musicians took place, lead by Sean Gregory.

#### **Evaluation organisation group, workshop leaders, Sean Gregory and teacher Hans Wijma:**

The performance lived up to expectations of the teacher and the students and the quality of the music was high. It is very important to make music that is interesting and varied. The music put all the different instruments in the spotlight, something that the kids could recognize! The communication within the groups as well towards the children was good. The enthusiasm and radiation of the students was great: the children really responded to that.

About the group improvisation: The students asked the children about this: The fact that Sean spoke English was no problem, because the signs were really clear. It shows that the children are used to listening and music. This is important, it makes the experience so much better for them and the workshop leaders.

The workshop leaders about the process/performance: The students really showed a passion for this. A lot of interesting things happened during the rehearsals. Discussions lead to really important decisions about compositional issues and the outcomes are very good. Some things that happened during the performance were unplanned, but is sounded great! The communication, both verbally as well as during the performance was good. The students are still getting better and better. It shows that the students are really into it.

Performance in the context: The first piece was very recognizable for the children. Common sounds.

The second piece was a lot more difficult, but because the first piece kind of prepared it, it was great as well. The children underlined this.

Some last tips from Hans Wijma for the next time: Keep to the timetable; Be enthusiastic to the children; Keep smiling; Radiate confidence.

In the afternoon the same thing happened, the other way around: Group 1 and 2 performed their pieces in the nursing home. The performance was introduced by a student from group 4, Marianne Klaassen. Group 3 and 4 observed. The performance ended with a workshop for the audience and the musicians lead by Sean Gregory.

#### **Evaluation organisation group, workshop leaders, Sean Gregory and activities coach of the home:**

The inhabitants really liked the performance. They could recognize the melodies and join in with the collaborative workshop. For a few people the music was too loud, some of them left. It is difficult to say what styles of music to choose for people who live in a nursing home. Everybody's taste is different. The inhabitants really liked the fact that the students actually talked to them, instead of performing and immediately leaving again. They also liked it that the students really acted and performed as a group (as a whole, working together).

It was very nice and exciting to see the reaction of the people: how they did or did not move and sang and joined in. It was satisfying to play for them. The piece had to be adapted in a way that the audience wouldn't be "blown away" by the loud music. Everybody picked it up really well (connecting!).

While preparing the piece you think about how the music should be (kind, friendly, lively, easy etc.) and it appeared to be working very well in reality!

The way the group adapted the piece and talked to the people was a very good approach and good start for a first time.

#### Critical points:

- Because there were a lot of musicians and a big audience of the NNC, the inhabitants formed a minority. It is more inviting and personal if the inhabitants form the majority.
- Mara Miribung (workshop leader) said this was also a good experience for the workshop leaders. She learned for the next time that it is better to work with smaller groups (less musicians) and perhaps have a story underneath or with the performance.

## **Friday December 10:**

**Evaluation orientation week in 2 groups (1+ 2 and 3 + 4): students, workshop leaders, mentors**

### **Group 1 and 2:**

A student of the Composition Department got more confidence in playing on his instrument. A student of the Classical Department liked the mix of classical and pop music: it makes you more free now to play and it is good to take this feeling along when playing classical repertoire. Working with shared ideas gives much satisfaction.

Benefit of this work for your professional development: a student from the Teacher's Training Department: it is nice to work with pupils of a primary school in this way. Workshop leader Luke: It helped me to be a better musician. This kind of experiences is relevant for a performing musician in trying to get the audience more involved. Some students think about going back to nursing home to make music there.

Evaluation of the week: The Monday was to "verbal". Next time better start with some activity.

Experiences of the students in the nursing home: They were not used to the atmosphere. The conversations with the elderly people brought up very personal issues (death of a relative; memories of earlier times etc.). They liked to see these young musicians play (it was mentioned several times). Those who were able to, liked to sing and to clap. The woman in the bed was taken to her room before the performance ended, because she felt frustrated not being able to demonstrate her appreciation by applauding.

### **Group 3 and 4:**

Everyone said, that they were skeptical at the beginning of the project. The way it started on Monday was partly due for that. The enthusiasm came when the London tutors started with their warming up. There were some specific items that were mentioned about musical things that were learned: rehearsing in a multi-discipline group; playing really together; the variation within the groups; the way signs were given and jargon was handled; it became more and more interesting; broadening your horizon; making contact with the audience.

A very interesting discussion came up about other things that were learned: some said, that by this week you become a more open minded person; you should not longer be afraid of trying things out, there is a very strong feeling of togetherness and mutual respect; you break your own boundaries by making this kind of music; also the jazz students had learned new ways of improvisation.

Experiences of the students in the primary school: Playing for an audience is a very worthwhile experience. Talking with the children about their feelings and their opinions was very eye-opening and gave them a better perspective of what they are doing or what they can do. All students enjoyed very much the contribution of Sean. Some students said that some kind of an introduction for the children would have its benefits. On the other hand everyone agreed that should not be some intellectual thing. It was noticed that children are very much thinking in atmospheres and images.

Some interesting remarks about the continuation of this project: Everyone tried to give some very concrete recommendations. The students said they want to learn more from each other, so a similar activity would be very nice. They also did the suggestion to form small groups and continue what has been achieved this far. The importance of the tutors from London was underlined. It was said that it was absolutely unthinkable for them to do all these things by themselves, there was a big need of guiding and advising.

## **What do you want to do different next time?**

- Starting practical. A more motivating beginning of the week.
- We can make the music more challenging, not so many repetitions and more electronic stuff in it.
- Maybe next time we can create a piece together with the elderly people.
- Workshop leader: You also can take an existing piece, take elements or the structure from it, and make a new composition with the inhabitants.

## **Discussion “Developing your Personal Pathway” lead by Peter Renshaw:**

In this discussion Peter Renshaw talked with the students about the choices they have to make for the future. What factors determine your choices? What determines your capabilities? He also placed music in a wider view. Considering the world's problems there are two central issues: Migration of people and Identity (who are you?). In addition to this last point you all have something to hang on to: music. Music has something to help people find out who they are. People in conservatoires in general are locked in boxes (narrow minded). The outreach work the Guildhall school of Music and Drama (GSMD) is doing creates a living/open culture (because of the several disciplines involved: composition, leading, performing etc.). You cannot cut off your music from you wider world.

Peter Renshaw asked the students about their experiences of this week: did they influence your values and the way you make music? Did it influence your wider values as well?

You have to connect to the wider context. In your personal development plan you make your first connection. People have lost the capability to be in touch with their inner/creative voices and minds. It is our (musicians') job to bring it back to the people. We have to create a collective voice. This requires very skilled leadership.

How to use this experience we gained in the workshops in working with our “normal” repertoire? It is about making connections with others/the world. Those connections will come back when you are doing your traditional work.

Nowadays you need to be a portfolio student: playing your instrument very well and next to that, be otherwise skilled. You learned these sort of skills already a little bit in this project. Take this experience with you and build on it from here. It is about exchange and collaboration. This is only possible in an open-mind situation. We need to get rid of boxes (class./jazz/present/past/future etc.). Our nature is not about boxes, but about feelings, values, emotions. We need to make “one music” of it and get it connected to our nature.