

Joint European Module ‘International Collaboration in Contemporary Improvisation’

Introduction

This document proposes a new Joint European Module in contemporary improvisation. This module has been developed as part of the METRIC Programme, and is intended to be delivered initially as a partnership between four institutions:

- Eesti Muusika- ja Teatriakadeemia (EMTA)
- Escola Superior de Música de Catalunya (ESMUC)
- Lietuvos muzikos ir teatro akademija (LMTA)
- Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (RCS)

The central aim of this module would be to facilitate an international exchange of teaching, learning and performance practice in contemporary improvisation at an advanced level. The design creates a uniform 5 ECTS module, that would be delivered in parallel at each institution.

Central to our proposal is a rotation of expert teachers between institutions. The module is delivered in four three-day workshops. The first workshop would be delivered entirely within the home institution. For the subsequent workshops, each institution would have a visit from a teacher from a partner institution. As well as allowing the students to experience four different perspectives on improvisation, this pattern will provide for an invaluable exchange of knowledge between the teachers, building a strong basis for future collaborations.

The table below shows how the mobility might work in practice:

	Workshop 1	Workshop 2a	Workshop 2b	Workshop 3a	Workshop 3b	Workshop 4a	Workshop 4b
Institution A	Teacher A		AB		AC		AD
Institution B	Teacher B	BA		BD		BC	
Institution C	Teacher C	CD		CA			CB
Institution D	Teacher D		DC		DB	DA	

In the first of the four workshops, each teacher stays at their home institution. For each of the mobile workshops, the home teacher should also be present alongside the visiting teacher. In order for this to happen, and not have any teacher be in two places at once, at least two different time slots need to be identified for the second and subsequent workshops.

Module Description

Course title

International Collaboration in Contemporary Improvisation

Course content

This course aims to allow students with an advanced level of skill in instrumental/vocal/electronic performance to experience a range of approaches to contemporary improvisation, in order to explore and develop their own performing practice in this field. Students will attend four intensive three-day workshops, each led by an expert practitioner from one of the partner institutions. Among the approaches that may be used include exploring open scores (text, graphic), conduction, extended techniques, solo and group improvisation, electronics, and bimusicality.

Objectives

- Demonstrate an ability to improvise fluently in a range of contemporary idioms
- Synthesise a range of teaching and learning approaches within your own improvising practice
- Collaborate successfully within an ensemble
- Develop the skill of active listening in performance
- Show a creative approach to instrumental/vocal/electronic performance

Type of course

Option

Level

Second cycle (masters) and/or 3/4 year bachelors

Teachers

Four teachers in rotation, one from each institution

Credit points

5 ECTS

Literature

Bailey, Derek. *Improvisation: Its Nature and Practice in Music*. New York: Da Capo Press, 1993.

Nettl, Bruno, and Melinda Russell, eds. *In the Course of Performance: Studies in the World of Musical Improvisation*. Chicago Studies in Ethnomusicology. Chicago, Ill. London: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1998.

Pett, Anton, and Etienne Rolin. *Anto Pett's Teaching System*. Bressuire: J.M. Fuzeau, 2007.

Stevens, John, and Ollie Crooke. *Search and Reflect: A Music Workshop Handbook*. Edited by Julia Doyle. Twickenham, England: Rockschool, 2007.

Toop, David. *Into the Maelstrom: Music, Improvisation and the Dream of Freedom*. 01 edition. New York, NY: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016.

Work forms

Small group workshops, minimum 3, maximum 8

Assessment

80% observation of working practice (each workshop tutor writes a report on the observed work of the students, summatively assessed as a whole by the home institution)

20% final performance (assessed jointly by home institution and one visiting tutor) – the final performance to take place as the culmination of the last workshop

Grading system

According to institution

Language

English

Schedule

Four three-day sessions

- four hours per day taught workshops
- two additional hours scheduled each day for student-led group/individual work

Prior qualification / prerequisites

- Performance practice at advanced level
- Some experience of contemporary improvisation

Information

- Students are encouraged if possible to take part in one of the workshops at another institution
- Workshops at each institution may be recorded on video and shared with the other partners
- If possible, funding permitting, the final performance might take the form of a joint festival, rotated between partner institutions