

# Artistic Processes in Music Performance

## A Research Area Calling for Inter-Disciplinary Collaboration

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### Preamble

This article aims to contribute to a discussion about collaborative approaches in research into artistic processes in the domain of music. A description of the difficulty of clearly describing the area of artistic research forms the basis for addressing questions of disciplinarity and ownership. This leads to a discussion from a Swedish perspective about relations between artistic research in the domain of music, musicology and music education research. Especially, in-house collaboration between artistic research and music education research, both hosted in Swedish schools of music, will be brought into focus. Possible roles of music performers and researchers are exemplified by two research projects, the methodological findings of which show that collaborative exploration based on a *partly* shared pre-understanding helped reveal aspects that would not have been revealed by the performer or the researcher individually. It is then proposed that there is a need for further collaboration between performing/researching artists and scientific researchers – a challenge to schools of music hosting both disciplines. (I use the term 'scientific' in the broad sense employed in Kjørup 2011.) This, in turn, raises questions about the future development of artistic research in music, such as whose artistic processes may be subject to exploration, which roles performers may take in artistic research, and who may be entitled to conduct artistic research.

In writing this article, a specific challenge has concerned the variety of concepts used to represent 'artistic research' (a concept that I prefer). The concepts 'art research', 'art-based research' (used by Schwarz 2011), 'artistic research' and 'research in and through the arts' have all been used in the international discussion, sometimes with very similar, sometimes with different implicit meaning. The variety in wording, as well as the shifts in debaters' ways of using the concepts, make evident the difficulty for debaters to clearly define the area of research they refer to, and for listeners and readers to understand the implicit meaning as intended. In this article I will use concepts as they are used in the literature quoted or referred to. In my own wording I will use 'artistic research', meaning 'research starting out in artistic practice', corresponding to the official description of

the Swedish Research Council (website of the Government Offices of Sweden, 2013). In alignment, the focus area of the present article is delimited to artistic research that meets the requirements for governmental funding in Sweden, namely that it is conducted by researchers who hold doctorates or who are considered artistic experts on a level equal to a doctorate. Accordingly, this article does not concern artistic research education.

## Characteristics of artistic research

The difficulty of communicating statements and viewpoints about artistic research in ways that allow listeners or readers to clearly understand the meaning as intended is caused in part by the differences between the disciplines that may be involved in researching this area. Indeed, artistic research is a wide area including genres of art that in some respects have a lot in common but in other respects very little. This is emphasised for instance by Schwarz (2011), who maintains that art-based research represents 'a multitude of equilateral approaches based on the different approaches in the various disciplines of the arts'. But, as claimed by many debaters, in spite of the great genre-related differences between the arts, the artist's active participation as a researcher remains a crucial characteristic of artistic research. At least, this is my interpretation of articles, books and oral discussions that I have had the opportunity to read and follow. Thus, 'the artist makes the difference' (the tagline of ORCiM, Orpheus Research Center in Music, Ghent) is a motto representing a crucial characteristic of artistic research that defines it as something different from academic research.

Being often referred to as the objective of artistic research, *the exploration of the tacit dimension of knowledge embedded in artistic processes and works* constitutes another crucial characteristic. However, rather than 'tacit knowledge', a concept used by many debaters, I prefer the concept 'tacit dimension of knowledge', or 'non-verbalised knowledge', because of the correspondence to Polanyi's ideas (1967) and to the character of music, a domain in which important artistic knowledge may very well be *sounded* – expressed in music – even if it has not been expressed in words. According to Coesens, Crispin and Douglas (2009), the non-verbalised dimension (my wording) implies a two-fold challenge to artistic research. On the one hand, it opens up for new and manifold approaches. On the other hand, it remains problematic because of the difficulties in capturing crucial aspects of artistic practice.

In a similar way, Nowotny maintains that research in the arts reveals tacit knowledge that is situated and embodied in specific artworks and artistic processes (Nowotny 2011 p. xxi). Thus, art practice plays a special role in *artistic research*, understood as *research in and through the arts*, in that it 'provides a specific articulation of the pre-reflective, non-conceptual content of art', as described by Borgdorff (2011 p. 44), who concludes

that art practice is not only the subject matter of research but also a crucial part of the research process itself, as well as the result of it, implying that the 'contemporary art practice constitutes a relevant context for research' (ibid. p. 46). These overlaps of artistic practice and research are addressed in a slightly different way by Schwarz (2011), who assigns to artistic research the quality of being a driving force in art production and conception. On this basis, he states that art practice ought also to be given the opportunity to influence artistic research, which, in turn, causes a need for independent art-based research in order to ensure that development in art production and conception remains a central topic of interest. Actually, in Sweden, artistic research is often conducted by artists outside the research establishment. The reason is a widespread notion that the artistic process may be influenced in a negative way when the research is conducted in the institutional environment of an academy (Aby and Lind 2011). Altogether, these descriptions of artistic research are consistent with Borgdorff's earlier statement on the general intention of artistic research: 'to expand our knowledge and understanding by conducting an original investigation in and through art objects and creative processes' (Borgdorff 2006a p. 18).

This understanding of artistic research implies more than the artistic process itself; it implies that a two-fold activity is required from the researching artist: on the one hand, planning and carrying through a creative process and presenting the artistic work – the product representing the result of the process – and, on the other hand, exploring the process and the product. This is consistent with the established understanding of artistic research in Sweden and other European countries. The UK forms an exception, though. Sullivan (2005), for instance, proposes that art practice in the domain of the visual arts represents research in itself. Since he does so in a monograph titled *Art Practice as Research*, his proposition may be interpreted as the revealing of an important quality of art practice not taken into account before, and/or as an assertion concerning art practice as research with the intention of convincing the reader. The two interpretations partly overlap and both of them need to be related to the common understanding of artistic research that was developing in many other European countries at the time this was written. This development may certainly have caused an urge to assert the status quo in the UK, where art practice by tradition has been understood as research. This has been the case not only in the visual arts, to which Sullivan (2005) refers. For instance, with reference to a long history of composition-as-research in the UK, Broad (2006) states that the creation of works of art in any artistic discipline may be accepted as artistic research in British academia.

## Relations between artistic and scientific research

Today, in 2013, there is a general agreement on the artist's two-fold activity as an artistic researcher. According to Nowotny (2011), this understanding implies that artistic research reaches further than scientific research since, in terms of public engagement and awareness awoken by the artistic processes/works (p. xxi f.), it includes not only the research community but also the wider public. Consistent with this is the idea that the area of artistic research may make an important contribution to 'the rest of the knowledge society' (Roos 2011 p. 213), in that it represents a broad variety of communication that mirrors the diversity in cultural expression. Besides the effect on public engagement, this implies that artistic research may contribute not only to artistic practice but also to the development of scientific research. This was agreed upon by representatives of Swedish universities and colleges of art participating in a panel discussion on functions of artistic research that took place at the annual symposium on artistic research organized by the Swedish Research Council in 2010 (Aby and Lind 2011). Addressing this topic, Schwarz (2011) even maintains that the most interesting research in this area is trans-disciplinary and is carried out without fixed methodological guidelines in ways that should encourage traditional, often mono-disciplinary research in the humanities to strive for a similar development (p. xxix).

In line with this, an important characteristic of the area of artistic research in Sweden is described as an explorative approach to research itself, implying the development of new methods for collecting data and presenting results (Aby and Lind 2011). Part of this development is the attempt to focus not only on the problem area of the research project in question but also on problematizing as action by using artistic research – intertwined in the artistic process – as a means for exploring a problem related to a specific place or situation. In this, the artist's/researcher's two-fold participation as a researcher participating *in* the artistic process remains important (*ibid.*).

Together, these crucial characteristics may lead to the assumption that artistic research is a kind of action research that has to be conducted by artists who explore their own artistic processes and works of art with the aim of revealing a tacit dimension of knowledge. This is by no means the case, though. On the contrary, many contributors to the discussion on artistic research welcome the increasing variety of methods and the development of trans-disciplinary cooperation beyond the artistic area. The variety of trans-disciplinary approaches in artistic research, remaining within as well as reaching beyond its own area, makes it even more complex and adds to the difficulty of defining it. This difficulty has been emphasized in the Swedish debate (Aby and Lind 2011).

The debate on artistic research includes critical as well as positive viewpoints as to the role of scientific research in artistic research. In some respect the criticism is con-

nected to an understanding of scientific research, especially the humanities, as being mono-disciplinary by tradition and – in contrast to artistic research – as representing a clear distance from artistic practice (cf. the reference to Schwarz 2011, above). According to Borgdorff (2011), it may be advisable for artistic researchers to keep in mind that interpretive, mainly verbally discursive humanistic approaches may easily prevail over strategies in artistic research that are, in contrast, thoroughly soaked with practice (p. 48). Due to these differences in approach, Borgdorff also maintains that collaboration between artists and scientists exists mainly in two different forms, indicating either that 'scientific research serves or illuminates the art' or that 'the art serves or illuminates what is going on in the science' (ibid. p. 53). This conclusion is based on references to Frayling's (1993) distinction between different types of research, slightly revised by Borgdorff: research on the arts – represented by the humanities; research for the arts – often represented by technical disciplines; and research in the arts – represented by research in and through the arts (Borgdorff 2011).

According to this reasoning, the role of art practice in artistic research as subject matter and method implies that interdisciplinary approaches involving scientific disciplines may certainly add relevant qualities, given that the scientific contribution is only a complement to the research conducted by artists participating in the practice that is being explored. This argument is maintained by other debaters as well, for instance by Schwarz (2011), and is also in line with a discussion at the annual symposium on artistic research hosted by the Swedish Research Council in 2011, where it was concluded that the area of artistic research needs to assert itself towards scientific research in order to become more than a mere support for the development of methods (Lind and Hellström Reimer 2012). It is worth noticing that these distinctions are still being made, four years after Lind's<sup>1</sup> interview with key representatives of the Swedish field of artistic research, in which all of them expressed a positive attitude to interdisciplinary collaboration between artistic and scientific researchers (Lind 2008).

A similar, positive attitude towards different ways of combining artistic and scientific research is expressed by Kjørup (2011), who pleads for plurality as a means for achieving good research. Like Borgdorff, he refers to Frayling's distinctions between scientific and artistic research but, in contrast to Borgdorff, Kjørup draws the conclusion that the aim of artistic research – to reveal a tacit dimension of knowledge embedded in the artistic processes – may be pursued more successfully in collaboration with scientific research. While other debaters emphasize that artistic research may contribute to method devel-

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<sup>1</sup> Torbjörn Lind is secretary of the advisory group for Artistic Research and Development Projects at the Swedish Research Council.

opment in scientific research, Kjølrup also maintains the opposite: not only that scientific research may serve as a complement, but also that it may contribute to a higher quality in artistic research. According to Kjølrup, scientific researchers may reveal aspects not recognized by the artists, although the latter are, indeed, closer to the tacit knowledge that is to be revealed. Still, Kjølrup remains hesitant towards collaboration with the humanities, and this for the same reason that has been pointed out by other debaters, namely that artistic research may become merely a support for research within the humanities. Instead, he finds fruitful similarities to artistic research in technical research and also in participatory action research. Kjølrup's argumentation, balancing pros and cons as to scientific research, mirrors the complexity of the overall debate on artistic research. Altogether, though, he recommends openness towards different kinds of collaboration, given that they may increase the quality of the research. So does Schwarz (2011 p. xxix), one of the debaters who take a critical position towards mono-disciplinary humanistic approaches. Schwarz emphasizes the need for postponing the definition of art-based research, not only because of the close relation between art practice and research, but also because of the increasing variety of methods and interdisciplinary approaches.

An increasing openness towards other research areas has also been noticed among artistic researchers applying for funding from the Swedish Research Council (Roos 2012). This is in line with the development in many scientific areas, including the humanities – a fact that has been neglected in some statements on the putatively mono-disciplinary approach of the humanities. It is understandable that the delimitation from other disciplines may be helpful for a young discipline striving to achieve autonomy. But since the debate to which I have referred shows a solid self-esteem, it is somewhat surprising that this confidence does not more often lead to the lowering of the guard against scientific research. The idea that the humanities represent a mono-disciplinary approach is in itself surprising: on the one hand because of the development of interdisciplinary research centres at many universities – centres at which researchers from different disciplines and universities/academies often cooperate; on the other hand because many guidelines for public research funding – being an increasingly important financial resource – encourage cross-disciplinary applications. In addition, many disciplines have developed into areas of knowledge that encompass a diversity of approaches which were once 'owned' by delimited disciplines. A look into neighbour disciplines of artistic research in music, such as musicology and music education (as a research subject), makes this evident.

## Relations between artistic research in music, musicology and music education research

Starting as music history, musicology has developed into a field of research which is poly-disciplinary in approach and method and which, besides approaches that may be described as representing musicology by tradition, represents for instance ethnomusicology, music anthropology and cultural studies. In parallel, an increasing number of national and international conferences address music research in general rather than musicology as a specific discipline. A Swedish example is the annual conference 'Musikforskning idag' (Music research today). An international example is the Conference on Interdisciplinarity in Musicology, CIM. Some international conferences (such as the International Symposium of Performance Science, ISPS) and research institutes are identified by a theme rather than by a specific discipline. Two such institutes are the Orpheus Research Center in Music (ORCiM) in Ghent and the Research Centre for Musical Performance as Creative Practice (AHRC) in Cambridge, UK.

In the Nordic countries, music education was established as a research discipline in the 1990s, and, like the conferences referred to above, the conferences of Nordiskt nätverk för musikpedagogisk forskning, NNMPF (Nordic Network of Music Education Research), welcome researchers from different disciplines. In contrast to musicology, music education research – like artistic research programmes – is situated in schools of music that constitute university departments or independent colleges/academies. This is so in most Nordic countries (Denmark forms an exception in that music education research is included in the department of education at Aarhus University). From the very beginning, music education research has represented an area of knowledge rather than an academic discipline with a clear delimitation. At The Royal College of Music in Stockholm this area is being described as the knowledge about learning/development and teaching in contexts in which music is included. (Other schools of music share a similar understanding of music education research.) Implications of results from the research may certainly concern teaching, but they may also be of relevance in a variety of other contexts. Music education research investigates musical situations in formal, informal and non-formal settings, and on all levels, including the professional artistic level. This implies a variety of approaches and overlaps with other disciplines. Likewise, researchers in music education represent a broad variety of professional backgrounds; most of them are music teachers in schools (from preschool all the way up to teachers' education), instrumental and ensemble teachers (in community music/culture schools or in higher music education)<sup>2</sup> or professional musicians, some of whom also teach.

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2 The concept 'instrumental and ensemble teacher' also includes 'voice'.

Music education research and artistic research in the domain of music partly derive from musicology, and musicology and music education research partly overlap with artistic research in music. The three have a poly-disciplinary character in common, a character that implies a broad variety of methods and of method development. All three disciplines welcome interdisciplinary collaboration in general. In Sweden, researching artists, as well as researchers in musicology and music education who are also experienced performers, have conducted comprehensive artistic research projects, some of which have been financed by the Swedish Research Council. Still, renowned representatives of artistic research put forward problems rather than advantages when they discuss collaboration with neighbour disciplines. I should emphasize that the debate to which I referred earlier concerns artistic research generally, not the domain of music specifically, and that some debaters represent other artistic domains than music. According to my experience, though, the situation is similar in music.

Actually, in the domain of music, the hesitation of artistic researchers to collaborate with other disciplines mainly concerns musicology as a representative of the humanities; music education research is not referred to. As to musicology, the hesitation may depend on the need for artistic research in music to distinguish itself in order to achieve autonomy, and on artistic researchers' notion of prevailing approaches in musicology. Especially during the phase of establishing a new discipline, a connection with a thoroughly established discipline may be regarded as unequal from the perspective of the younger discipline, in particular if this discipline came into being by breaking loose from the more established one. Artistic research in music derives at least partly from musicology, a discipline that has, indeed, had a strong influence by means of supporting and providing conditions for the development of artistic research. In addition, musicology has been represented in peer-review groups examining quality in artistic research and research applications. Hence, it is understandable that artistic researchers in music find it important to distinguish their own exploration of a tacit dimension and of embedded knowledge in artistic processes and works of music from a musicological approach 'by tradition', at least when the latter is understood as the exploration of works of music conducted by researchers representing theoretical knowledge about music rather than practical knowing gained from thorough experience in music performance, improvisation or composition. However, since the interpretive exploration of works of music forms an important branch of musicology, since experienced musicians are, indeed, to be found among musicologists, and since some musicologists do take an interest both in embedded knowledge in artistic processes and in the development of research methods on equal terms with researching artists, such hesitation may diminish.



It must be emphasized that shared interests and a mutual recognition of qualities among neighbour disciplines form conditions of utmost importance for collaboration. This should be remembered also by researchers in music education, a discipline which is well established in comparison to artistic research. Since no representatives of artistic research (as far as I know) refer to music education research when addressing problems in interdisciplinary cooperation, there seems to be no or at least little need for artistic research in music to distinguish itself from music education research. However, the lack of hesitant comments may also be the result of a lack of recognition of the possibilities to collaborate. In Sweden, both disciplines are situated in schools of music (representing a university department or an independent college of music), close to higher education in music performance and composition as well as to programmes for the education of music teachers. In the debate on artistic research in general, such a local context including practice-based artistic education is put forward as an important condition for artistic research (Schwarz 2011), which implies that the research disciplines situated in schools of music may benefit from the advantages provided. This will be further discussed in the following section of this article, starting out from experiences gained in collaborative exploration of artistic considerations in performance preparation.

### **Exploration of performance preparation – a challenge to artistic and music education research**

Discussions about artistic research often refer, explicitly or implicitly, to processes in which original works of art are being created. In the area of music, however, processes in which works of art are being *re-created* – performance preparation, interpretation, transcription and arrangement – are equally important. On a shared level, the preservation and renewal of cultural heritage as well as the establishment and development of contemporary styles are at stake in performance preparation and presentation. In combination with this shared level, there is an individual level that concerns musicians' artistic expertise, such as stylistic familiarity and (re-)creativity, skills, and understanding. Considerations in performance preparation and public presentation of works of music often belong to a tacit dimension of artistic knowledge and are therefore important to reveal. This complex field calls for a rich body of research. It also constitutes a challenge as regards approach and method. In addition, it is a field where artistic research in music and music education research overlap, thus challenging researchers from the two disciplines to explore it in collaboration. Such collaboration has taken place for instance in some projects financed by the Swedish Research Council. Here, I will exemplify possible ways of collaborating by turning to two of these projects, of which I have had the privilege to be the leader.

Both projects have focused on an area that may be described as *performing artists' artistic processes*. The first project explored the participating musicians' processes of interpretation-finding, while the second project took an interest in the broader question of how performing instrumentalists continue to develop their artistic expertise. The musicians of the two projects worked on music from the Baroque era to music of a contemporary, experimental kind. Both projects included parallel case studies structured as participatory action research in natural professional contexts. This contextual delimitation was important because of the intention to capture considerations in artistic processes that represent professional conditions.

In both projects I chose a cultural-psychological perspective which offers a framework for studying how traditions influence the actions of individuals and vice versa (Bruner 2002/1996). It was also important to recognize the cultural and biological (physical and emotional) dimensions and their interplay in individuals' actions in different contexts. Individuals' ways of coping with culturally conventionalized knowledge are of great interest in this perspective, especially since this knowledge often belongs to a non-verbalized dimension and, in addition, is frequently taken for granted and not reflected on. In music performance in particular, the ways musicians relate to conventions when structuring and expressing music are central: *Which* conventions do they adhere to? *How* and *why* do they do so, and *how* and *why* (if at all) do they *break* conventions?

In the two projects, the musicians decided individually how to participate: as active participants in participatory action research, or by conducting artistic development or research projects. Each of them planned their own case study in cooperation with me, focusing on a project included in his/her professional commitments. These options were important in that they allowed for performers to participate even if they did not have enough time to commit themselves to conducting an artistic research project. A request to take (shared) responsibility in doing so would probably have made some of them refrain from participating at all. Another crucial aspect concerns my own professional background as a chamber musician, by means of which I have acquired an understanding needed to maintain a focus of artistic relevance. This was especially important in the case studies where the musicians acted as participants but not as co-researchers.

In both projects a collaborative approach was applied: I observed the musicians' performance preparation in series of rehearsals, concert performances and, in some cases, CD recordings. During the sessions, which were video-recorded, I made my observations sitting on a chair close to the camera, a position on which the musician and I had agreed. Depending on the musicians' decisions on how to participate in the research project, the nature of their contributions to the exploration varied. All of them reflected verbally on considerations made during the sessions. Some of them did so before and

while rehearsing. All did so afterwards. In addition, some musicians kept logs. Two musicians who participated as co-researchers continuously wrote reflections in which they put their artistic processes into a wider context of professional musicianship. In each case study, the musician(s) in question and I followed up the sessions through analytical discussions. In a similar way the researching musicians and I followed up their written reflections at 'stations' during their artistic processes. To summarize: With the aim of revealing a tacit dimension of knowledge embedded in performance preparation, we used a general method of collecting many-sided data in a natural context. The method was adapted according to the conditions of each case study. Below, this is exemplified through brief descriptions of two case studies of different characters. The first one represents the first major research project while the next one represents the second major research project.

A Polish violinist who prepared concert performances of *Sonata Monologue* by Aram Khachaturian – a work of music she had neither heard nor studied before – said that she found it amazing how my mere presence in the practice room – my 'just sitting there', as she put it – made her become aware of more aspects of her interpretation-finding than she had recognized before. While rehearsing, she used to make a comment when she had paid attention to something special. She often did so after first having reflected *physically*, by means of repeating gestures and trying out a specific expression in detail. She was one of the musicians who preferred to be actively involved in participating research rather than to take on the commitment as a co-researcher, but, nevertheless, she did contribute significantly to the exploration. Besides reflecting while rehearsing, after each rehearsal she summed up her considerations and described her intentions with regard to the following rehearsal. She also kept in mind the considerations she had made earlier in the process of interpretation-finding and referred to them in our analytical discussions. The results of this case study mainly concern intra-musical aspects of interpretation-finding, such as considerations while developing an understanding of the composer's intentions with regard to the work as a whole, to its constituent parts and to musical details which, as written, are impossible to perform on the prescribed instrument, considerations on technical solutions and their interpretational consequences, and on communicating the music as intended in public performance. When combining these results with results from the project's other case studies, it was possible to describe and conceptualize general, normally non-verbalized aspects of interpretation-finding and professional approach in ways that the musicians could agree upon. The spin-off results mainly consist of implications for professional development and performance education.

In the second major project, an explorative approach applied by one of the musicians in order to design thematic concert programmes, some of which included interaction

with the audience, gave rise to a case study in which the musician and I collaborated as researchers, exploring artistic processes in his thematic freelance project consisting of a series of concerts with chamber music by Franz Schubert. Besides exploring the preparation of the concert performances, we carried through a retrospective study of the background of his project. This revealed a long-term interplay between experiences made with a distance of several years and in different contexts: he had transcribed the piano parts for the guitar, interpreted the music from the positions as transcriber and performer, and interpreted and re-interpreted it with different colleagues. In this case study the musician continuously reflected on his artistic process, both orally and in writing. In addition to his reflections, the Urtext score, his transcription of this score, and the documentation of his performances formed the data for my analysis. This analysis gave rise to questions from me and to joint analytical discussions. On the basis of these discussions, the musician developed his reflective writing even further and I re-analysed the data. Like in the first major project, we mainly focused on the tacit dimension of intra-musical artistic processes in interpretation-finding, but, in contrast to the first project, we also put this dimension into a wider context of freelance musicianship.

Here, the aim is to discuss inter-disciplinary collaboration in general rather than results from selected studies, which is why I refrain from presenting the specific outcomes of my projects. However, in relation to the purpose of this article it is important to note that the collaborative approach has been found effective for revealing artistic processes in professional, planned projects, and also, as maintained for instance by Dunin-Woyseth, Karlsson, Langkilde and Paavolainen (2007), for revealing expert music performers' ways of unifying practice and theory in such projects. This estimation of the methodological approach concerns not only the case studies conducted by me but also the studies included in the doctoral dissertation of Karin Johansson (2008), who participated in the first major project.

## Future challenges

In the projects referred to, the shared understanding of crucial (but not all) parts of the focus area was of great importance. The collaborations helped reveal and conceptualize tacit dimensions and embedded knowledge in performance preparation and interpretation-finding. This is consistent with Kjølrup's notion of the advantages of collaboration between artistic and scientific researchers in participatory action research (2011). A partly shared and partly diverging understanding of the problem area may allow artists and scientific researchers to communicate in a mutually understandable way while collaboratively exploring details of the problem area from different points of view. In turn, this may facilitate the revealing of new aspects of a detail and thus the achieving of a more profound understanding (cf. Kjølrup, *ibid.*). It is true that such advantages

may be achieved in other kinds of interdisciplinary collaboration too, but concerning the non-verbalized dimension at the core of performance preparation – a most challenging thing to explore – a *partly shared* and *partly diverging* understanding is of particular importance since it makes it possible for researching artists and academic researchers to shed light on a detail from points remaining close to each other. Such closeness may facilitate a deep illumination of the detail in question, which is of specific importance with regard to the development of individual expressivity in performance preparation. This underlines the challenge to scientific and artistic researchers and artists in the domain of music to explore the area in collaboration, and, in particular, the challenge to music education researchers, artistic researchers and expert musicians in schools of music to do so with the aim of maintaining solid links between research, professional practice and higher education.

Such exploration in artistic research is only possible given a wider definition of the area than the one implied by the requirement that artists, as artistic *researchers*, explore their own artistic processes. While such a narrow delimitation may have been necessary during the first years of establishing artistic research as a discipline, in the long run it may have the unfortunate effect of counteracting interdisciplinary collaboration. A narrowly delimited research in and through the arts may certainly contribute to the development of methods and approaches (not least regarding the exploration of artistic processes that form parts of the very act of artistic research) but it may also draw the attention away from the artistic practices of excellent artists who act on the professional artistic arena but who do not regard themselves as artistic researchers. A narrow field of artistic practice may be revealed, but a wider field, as interesting to explore, will remain undisclosed.

Some of the musicians who participated in my projects represent excellence on an international level and none of them would think of applying for grants financing artistic research. Their and many other distinguished musicians' non-verbalized knowledge is of a high relevance to the professional artistic area. A collaborative approach in artistic research is in line with requests put forward in the debate, according to which it is important to maintain a high relevance to professional art practice and, also, to leave space for professional artistic practice in artistic research. These considerations imply that musicians and researchers thoroughly experienced in artistic music practice should be welcome to participate in different ways in collaborative artistic research.

This is important to note also in light of the prevailing Swedish policy to prioritize support of innovative cross-disciplinary research, a policy which may be understood as an incentive to collaborate with researchers from other universities or faculties rather than with colleagues from (in-house) neighbour disciplines. Indeed, there *is* a need for inno-

vative cross-disciplinary research. But the policy also means that intra-disciplinary and close-disciplinary collaboration may be left aside. In the combined wording of two sayings, there is a risk that babies are thrown out with the bathwater when the adults cross the river to fetch new and presumably better water for their little ones. Schools of music should therefore support in-house, collaborative research on artistic processes in music with the aim of achieving synergy between their expertise in artistic practice, artistic research and music education research.

Many kinds of artistic process wait to be explored. For instance, it is not unusual that teenagers develop excellent craftsmanship and personal expressivity in a stylistic niche. It is of common interest that the artistic processes and the knowledge formation of these young people are explored, preferably through research involving both artistic and scientific disciplines. The examples given in this articles, and the questions they raise, emphasize a conclusion drawn by Schwarz (2011) and Kjørup (2011): there is a need for openness towards interdisciplinary cooperation in artistic research and for postponing the definition of it.

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## Abstract

### Artistic Processes in Music Performance: A Research Area Calling for Inter-Disciplinary Collaboration

This article aims to contribute to a discussion about collaborative approaches in research into artistic processes in the domain of music. A description of the difficulty of clearly describing the area of artistic research forms the basis for addressing questions of disciplinarity and ownership. This leads to a discussion from a Swedish perspective about relations between artistic research in the domain of music, musicology and music education research. Especially, in-house collaboration between artistic research and music education research, both hosted in Swedish schools of music, will be brought into focus. Possible roles of music performers and researchers are exemplified by two research projects, the methodological findings of which show that collaborative exploration based on a partly shared pre-understanding helped reveal aspects that would not have been revealed by the performer or the researcher individually. It is then proposed that there is a need for further collaboration between performing/researching artists and scientific researchers – a challenge to schools of music hosting both disciplines. This, in turn, raises questions about the future development of artistic research in music, such as whose artistic processes may be subject to exploration, which roles performers may take in artistic research, and who may be entitled to conduct artistic research.

**Keywords**

Music performance, artistic research, music education research, interdisciplinarity, collaborative method.

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