

PETER DEJANS
ORPHEUS INSTITUTE

RESEARCH IN EUROPEAN HIGHER MUSIC EDUCATION: A CHALLENGE?

In Europe, third cycle studies in music are a rather new phenomenon within the conservatoire environment. Third cycle or doctoral studies and the research activities that are connected to that have historically been the preserve of universities. Conservatoires (including music universities, music academies and Musikhochschulen) traditionally offer vocational training that leads to a career as a professional musician or in some cases also as a music teacher. One of the main challenges for those in conservatoire-based higher music education is to meet the challenge of designing courses and documentation in line with the Bologna Process while safeguarding the essential nature of professional music training, with its demand for practical achievement at the highest level. This implies the introduction of high-quality research into a musical setting, adapting it to the characteristics of the discipline and thus creating a practice-based and discipline-specific research environment for musicians.

The Orpheus Institute (Gent, BE) has taken up that challenge the past ten years and introduced a doctoral programme for performers and composers. Recently the Orpheus Institute launched a Research Centre developing a sound research discourse and offering a framework within which musical artists can fruitfully conduct their own research on topics which are at the heart of the art of music making (musical practice). Video footage demonstrating various examples of research projects and research methodologies will be presented in order to give more concrete form to this new research concept.