

Projects and workshops at the Musikhögskolan i Malmö (January – November 2022)

Since the launch of the Musense project in January 2022, two workshops have been initiated at the Malmö Academy of Music as case studies in the frame of Musense. These case studies will continue in several stages and modifications throughout the 3-year period.

1. Opera production H. Purcell – Dido and Aeneas (reh. January-February, perf. March 2022). Stage director: Sara Wilén; Musical director: Peter Spisky; Choreography: Pavel Drazdil; Singing teacher & coach: Maria Streijffert
2. Baroque dance workshop (6-7 November 2022). Dance instructor: Karin Modigh; Musical director: Peter Spisky; Researcher: Sara Wilén

Both projects involved multiple departments of the Academy, as well as some external experts. The use of the available digital media (zoom technology) – both in the process of rehearsing as well as the outcome – provided the necessary context for constructing of the possible models for further investigative projects with more advanced technology (LOLA). Musense survey is being used as a follow. We believe that the general character of the questionnaire will provide some highly informative data from participants united in a thematically defined environment.

The production of Dido was taking place in the shadow of the third wave of covid pandemic. Rehearsals started in late January when the restrictions were only slowly being lifted. As the performances were set to the beginning of March, we were not even sure if performances will be live or streamed.

This situation had consequences on all aspects of the production. The stage director Sara Wilén had to calculate alternative ways of staging that will allow for both live and/or stream version. Not the least, due to some sicknesses, the whole rehearsal period was going on parallel on zoom for those who needed to stay home (one whole week even the members of production team). A big screen with a zoom connection was used to connect the people in the rehearsal with those who had to stay home.

The restrictions were lifted in the end of February, so the performances took place live with audience, although we kept the technology to record the performances.

The experiences of the project conducted partly on zoom were evaluated by the directors and participants. The one-way communication caused by the latency is an obvious hinder in musical communication. LOLA-system (already purchased, but not installed yet) was discussed. Anticipated skepticism was immediately expressed: While the latency problem is solved, will LOLA be able to provide a sufficient substitute to the “in-person” musical communication?

Dancing LOLA

To zoom on LOLA, a baroque dance workshop has been set up to test Lola’s capacity to transfer not only a coordinated audio and video signal, but also the physical interaction between a dancer and a musician.

Two-day workshop with dancer and choreographer Karin Modigh (Stockholm/Paris) was planned to involve several Nordic Academies (Malmö, Copenhagen, Oslo). The aim was to

connect dancers, musicians and researchers in an experimental study where the connection between dance and music is problematized.

Unfortunately, the LOLA installation proved to be more complicated than expected (both in Malmö and Oslo). We decided to proceed using the ZOOM technology again, but with the future LOLA project in mind (spring 2023).

We scaled down the participants to Malmö (divided into several rooms) and Copenhagen (The Royal Danish Academy of Music). By spreading the project over two days, the participants were allowed to experience alternatively both live and online sessions. Their experiences will be gathered in a questionnaire. The answers will be analyzed and follow-up sessions with LOLA-technology are planned in the early spring 2023.

