

## **Artistic Research Practices as Inspiration for the Development of Research Tools for Higher Education Music Students**

### **How can Higher Education Music Students develop research tools for their Artistic Research projects?**

Students in Higher Education (HE) need to develop research skills, but often find it challenging to conduct research within their artistic practices. How does research fit into the artistic process? Which research tools might be appropriate? In this presentation we will describe research tools that were used in two different composing practices, and we will explain how these can be used to inform artistic research practices of HE music students.

The first example of an Artistic Research (AR) project was Jimena Maldonado's exploration of the use of a tangram puzzle to compose and notate a piece through a collaborative process. The role of a visual element (a tangram puzzle) was investigated in both the compositional and the interpretative process, to find the best way of notating the piece so that it could facilitate a deep visual-musical creative interpretation. Rehearsals with performers were audio-recorded, where several different ways of notation were performed by the players. Afterwards, the recordings and score annotations were analysed. An action-reflection method was useful for exploring various interpretations based on visual elements, for evaluating musical-visual responses and feedback from players, and for developing the final version of the score.

The second AR project was Dennis Braunsdorf's investigation into the process of producing compositions employing a self-designed digital musical instrument (DMI). Audio-visual self-study observation methods were utilised to gain knowledge of composing, the impact of the DMI, and the implementation of an iterative design process. These research tools focused on the principles of autoethnographic studies, reflection-in-action studies, and studies of the creative process of music composition. Findings from this AR project revealed critical insights into the iterative design of both creating compositions and developing a DMI. HE music students can adapt these research tools and the iterative design process to analyse and reflect on their compositions, compositional process, and artistic performances.

Findings from these artistic research practices demonstrate that various research approaches can be used. Music students can benefit from learning about various tools and exploring these within their artistic practices. It will depend on students' personality and skills, and the artistic context which research tools are appropriate.

Parallel Session



**Jimena Maldonado**  
**Hanze University of Applied Sciences, Groningen (NL)**  
**[j.maldonado.alvarez@pl.hanze.nl](mailto:j.maldonado.alvarez@pl.hanze.nl)**

Jimena Maldonado Álvarez (1988) is a composer, researcher and educator. Having studied both Composition and Photography, she is interested in combining the two disciplines in order to achieve alternative forms of composing, researching, and collaborating. Jimena completed a BA in Composition and Music Theory at the Research and Music Studies Centre (CIEM) and holds a Diploma in Photography (EAF). She then completed a MA in Composition at the Royal Conservatory of The Hague. Jimena recently completed a practice-based PhD at the Birmingham Conservatoire. Her research focused on investigating a range of potential connections between music and visual elements with the aim of integrating both elements in her compositional process, as well as during the process of communicating and collaborating with performers. Jimena currently works as a freelance composer and as a Practice Based Research teacher in Master of Music at the Prince Claus Conservatoire, Groningen.



**Dennis Braunsdorf**  
**Hanze University of Applied Sciences, Groningen (NL)**  
**[d.h.braunsdorf@pl.hanze.nl](mailto:d.h.braunsdorf@pl.hanze.nl)**

Dennis Braunsdorf (1988) is a composer and researcher in music technology. Dennis specialised in electroacoustic compositions for media, in particular for Hollywood movie trailers and commercials. He has established a list of credits, including compositions for Hollywood movie trailers, films, and commercials. Dennis' academic path started in 2009 at the University of the Arts in Utrecht (HKU). In 2013, he achieved a Bachelor of Music with honours and in 2015 a Master of Music degree at the HKU. In 2021, Dennis achieved a PhD by practice at Bournemouth University in England. His thesis explored the impact of his newly designed virtual instrument upon composing Western popular music for commercials and movie trailers. Since 2022, Dennis has been a teacher-researcher in the Master of Music at the Prince Claus Conservatoire in Groningen.

## Parallel Session

**Henrique Meissner****Hanze University of Applied Sciences, Groningen (NL)****[g.h.meissner@pl.hanze.nl](mailto:g.h.meissner@pl.hanze.nl)**

Henrique Meissner is Course Leader for Practice-based Research in the Master of Music at the Prince Claus Conservatoire and Senior Researcher at the Research Centre for Music in Context of the Hanze University of Applied Sciences in Groningen. Henrique studied at the Utrecht Conservatoire with recorder as main instrument. She obtained her MA and PhD in Music Psychology in Education at The University of Sheffield (UK). Since 2019 she works with Higher Education music students, teaching research skills and coaching MMus students undertaking practice-based research. In 2022 she conducted an exploratory theoretical study into possibilities for socially engaged artistic research in music practices. Henrique has published in peer-reviewed journals and is co-editor of *Sound Teaching: A Research-Informed Approach to Inspiring Confidence, Skill, and Enjoyment in Music Performance* (Routledge, 2022). Her research interests are related to instrumental learning and teaching in various contexts, performance expression, and socially engaged artistic music practices.