

## Reflection-based Artistic Professional Practice

Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

01.09.2020 - 31.08.2023

## RESULTS:

# Teaching and Learning Guidelines for Implementing Critical Reflection in HME

## Intellectual Output 1



ORPHEUS  
INSTITUT



## Imprint

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If you want to quote from this document, please use the following bibliographic reference:  
**Buyken, Evelyn et al. (2023), RAPP Lab Outcomes, in: Research Catalogue. An International Database for Artistic Research, <https://doi.org/10.22501/rc.1673421>**

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## 1. Introduction

RAPP stands for "Reflection-based Artistic Professional Practice" and brings together the expertise of six Higher Music Education (HME) institutions in Europe plus the AEC: Association Européenne des Conservatoires – AEC, Bruxelles, Belgium; Conservatorio di Musica Santa Cecilia, Rome, Italy; Eesti Muusika-ja Teatriakadeemia, Tallinn, Estonia; Hochschule für Musik und Tanz, Cologne, Germany (as Coordinator); mdw – Universität für Musik und Darstellende Kunst, Vienna, Austria; Norges musikhøgskole, NMH, Oslo, Norway; Orpheus Instituut Ghent, Belgium. It is a three-year EU-funded research project supported by the ERASMUS+ programme "Strategic Partnerships" (2020-2023). During a series of six multi-national experiments, described as Labs, advanced music students had the opportunity to try out new teaching and learning formats.

RAPP Lab focuses on the development of artistic study programmes. It is not or only in a wider sense informing scientific- or scholarly-based study programmes in Music. It is a research project which explores how methods of Artistic Research can inform and enhance learning and teaching settings in artistic study programmes. Reflection (Reflection-based Practice) is a key term and at the heart of the project. But this project is not creating an ontological and theoretical concept of reflection in artistic practice, it asks: How can methods and findings of Artistic Research develop a learning and teaching culture, through which the student's ability to critically reflect on and in their artistic doing can be fostered?

RAPP Lab does not assume that individual artistic teaching is unreflective. Rather, RAPP Lab assumes that sayings like "Do it until it sounds well" or "Do it like I do" are belonging to an old conservatory thinking that belongs to history and that it is the motivation of HME institutions to guide students to self-learning and to a teaching at eye-level.

But: There is a need to give concrete examples and research-based hand-on-tools to implement learning and teaching settings in which this self-reflective, experimental learning atmosphere can emerge. And not only directed to teachers, but also to students: How can students learn to get to know, to articulate their own reflective potential? And this is exactly where RAPP Lab comes in: It is about developing concrete methods for artistic study programs that can be used both as fragmented solutions for individual lessons, for group lessons, for artistic-scientific formats, and for interdisciplinary collaborations.

We as a RAPP Lab team propose: Reflection-based artistic practice

- should have a self-esteem in itself,
- is something, which a student should be allowed to learn as a competence for professional development and personal growth,
- should be fixed in study programmes and not happen by accident.
- and its role for students should be visible.

And for this, we need Artistic Research and its methods:

- to foster an experimental and open sense of coming to results as a process of doing (knowing-in-the-making)
- to promote 'research' as a continuum between experimental-artistic to scholarly based searching
- to strengthen the attitude of learning as an open process

RAPP Lab is based on the premise that the way of handling artistic material can change through reflection, can lead to new practices, to new concert formats, learning settings and also to new artistic profiles and agencies. It is about developing concrete tools – inspired by Artistic Research – for study programmes that can be used both as fragmented solutions for individual lessons, for group lessons, for artistic-scientific formats, and for interdisciplinary collaborations.

RAPP Lab considers reflection in a wide sense: as a verbal practice as well as a bodily practice. To reflect can mean to listen and react carefully during an improvisation, it can mean to write an exposé, it can mean to day-dream, to wonder, to have an 'aha-moment' under the shower, to be inspired within in a chat with a colleague, to lose control or to collapse.

RAPP Lab's research questions are: How can we playfully investigate the relationship of reflection and the student's artistic practice, without saying this or that is reflection. We would like to ask: How can a reflective attitude in handling artistic material occur in specific learning environments? How can e.g. the focus on the bodily sensitivities we rely on while playing, singing, dancing change and develop my reflective skills?

Together with our 7 partners, we developed 6 different thematic fields of experimentation.

These aimed:

1. to try out different ways of enhancing (self-)reflexivity in artistic practice,
2. to identify concrete methods from these experiments
3. and to transform them into reproducible material.

This stands at RAPP Labs core: creating new learning environments with students and teachers all over Europe, and being together as a community of trying out new things, allow uncertainty, taking risks, allowing failures and stepping on into new concepts for teaching and learning. As a side-effect: a lot of institutional and epistemological knowledge has emerged, for example: When do our partner institutions start implementing Artistic Research? Is Artistic Research open to all study programs? How are students prepared to the third cycle? What degrees are offered? Which different 'cultures' of Artistic Research are coming together? Our strategy is: Show, not hide the diversity of Artistic Research in the different institutions, ranging from Orpheus Institute to the NMH Oslo.

Each Lab has its own research question:



### LAB 1 | OSLO

Developing Critical Reflection  
in Artistic Research

March 2021 at Norges musikhøgskole,  
NMH Oslo, Norway (Online)

How can we enhance musical practice through identifying, developing and enacting a structured model of critical reflection?



### LAB 2 | GHENT

Developing Cognitive Skills for  
Artistic Research in Music

September 2021 at Orpheus Instituut,  
Ghent, Belgium

How can we empower and encourage our reflective potential through developing cognitive skills and conceptual models outside our own main expertise?



### LAB 3 | COLOGNE

Embodied Reflection  
in Artistic Practice

May 2022 at Hochschule für Musik und  
Tanz Köln, Germany

How can we explore reflexivity in artistic doing from perspectives of embodied and silent knowledge, from states of moving, hearing, sensing and mobilizing the known as well as the unknown?



### LAB 4 | VIENNA

Transculturality  
in Artistic Research

May 2022 at mdw - Universität für Musik und  
darstellende Kunst Vienna, Austria

How can we enhance our ability to reflect our artistic practice and art-based scientific methods, through experiencing them in different social, cultural and artistic contexts?



### LAB 5 | TALLINN

Exploring Musical Identities:  
Autoethnography

September 2022 at Eesti Muusika-ja  
Teatriakadeemia Tallinn, Estonia

How can we broaden our knowledge of self and musical-identity through developing skills in autoethnography in writing, self interviews and self observations?



### LAB 6 | ROME

Conscious Improvisation:  
A Deep and Functional Approach

March 2023 at Conservatorio di musica  
Santa Cecilia Rome, Italy

How can we allow individuals to reflect on their own artistic practice through 'conscious improvisation' and learning to take risks, do choices, and stay in intimate situations without following a so-called 'ex cattedra' teaching figure?

## 2. The experimental set-up: How RAPP Lab was created

### Work-packages or self-reflective questionnaires

In order to prepare the content of the six Labs, three “work-packages” as self-reflective questionnaires for teachers have been created:

#### Work-Package 1:

Theories/Concepts of Reflectiveness and Critical Thinking and their Relevance for Artistic Research

1. What artistic experiences inspire your Lab?
2. Which theories/concepts of reflectiveness and critical thinking do you expect to be helpful for the process of artistic research in your Lab?  
(e.g. accessible case studies and examples of good practice of LTT activities, documentations and outcomes of European projects conducted at Music HEI (such as POLIFONIA, SHARE, Advancing Supervision for Artistic Research Doctorates and NAIP, national reports from course leaders, other ...)
3. Describe in which way these theories and concepts are connected with you and the practice you intend to reflect in your Lab.  
(e.g. by surprise/“trouvaille”/accident; idea through quotes from other publications; own research; collaborations e.g. with other departments/partner projects ...)
4. Which qualities of this dialogue between theory and practice feed back into your research process? (surprise, motivation, loss of clarity, etc.)
5. In which real or virtual spaces did you search?
6. Which 5 most important terms would you suggest for a glossary with a central RAPP Lab terminology?
7. Which 5 terms would you like to redefine?
8. For which term would you like to write a glossary-article?

## Work-Package 2:

### Methods of Learning & Teaching RAPP Lab

1. Thinking about your own artistic practice: Which methods do you personally use to develop and further your own reflectiveness and critical thinking?
2. Which teaching formats would you describe to be helpful for students to develop and further reflectiveness and critical thinking in artistic practice?
3. Which media (or materials) supports your methods to develop and further reflectiveness and critical thinking in artistic practice?
4. Which questions/hints/exercises [not settings!] would you name as an useful opener for reflectiveness and critical thinking in artistic practice?
5. Which questions/hints/exercises [not settings!] would you name of having a negative impulse on reflectiveness and critical thinking in artistic practice?
6. How would you describe your process of finding a suitable method to develop and further reflectiveness and critical thinking in learning and teaching formats in artistic practice?

## Work-Package 3:

### Settings of Learning & Teaching RAPP Lab

Experimental settings for acquiring and testing knowledge and skills in artistic practice

1. Could you name an “experimental setting” for acquiring knowledge and skills in artistic practice in which you are especially interested in and why?
2. In which way do you define this setting as “experimental”?
3. Which “experimental settings” of acquiring knowledge and skills in artistic practice did you already use in teaching artistic practice (e.g. in your Lab)?

4. Which effects do these experimental settings have on the relationship between teachers and students?
5. How could teachers evaluate knowledge and skills in experimental settings and what are the challenges?
6. How do evaluation criteria change in the context of reflectiveness as artistic practice (e.g. embodied knowledge; collaborative feedback)?
7. Which role does the feedback-process have in acquiring and testing knowledge and skills, what kind of feedback would be necessary and how could it be implemented?

## Work-Package 4

### Transformations of Learning & Teaching RAPP Lab

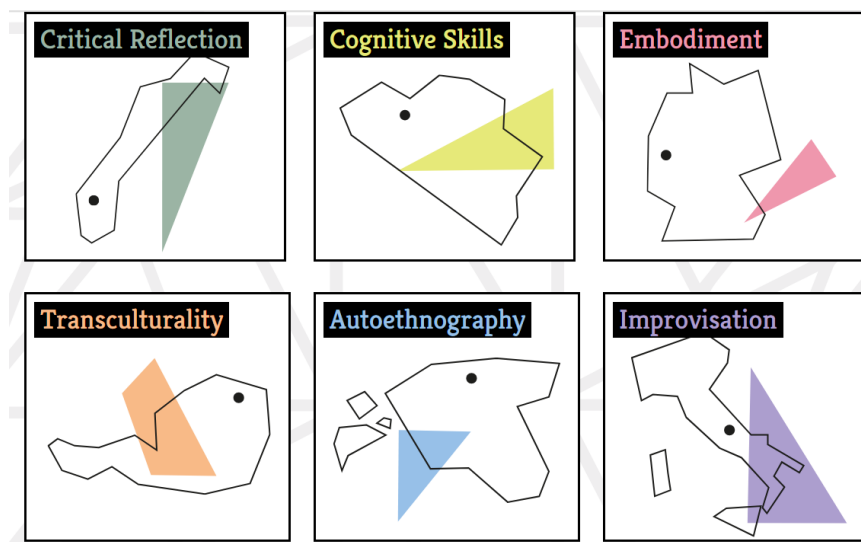
Strategies for empowering musicians to create new economic & cultural roles and structures

1. Describe which strategies RAPP Lab use to empower artists in finding their role on the labour market.
2. How could economic and cultural roles change through RAPP Lab-graduates in your opinion?
3. In which ways do conservatoires need to adapt their role to empower graduates for this transformation in the labour market?
4. Which new roles would you think that RAPP Lab-graduates as entrepreneurs or employees could have in (European) economic, social and cultural fields in future?
5. Which skills or strategies empower RAPP Lab graduates in a wider interdisciplinary way (e.g. in other economic, social and cultural fields)?

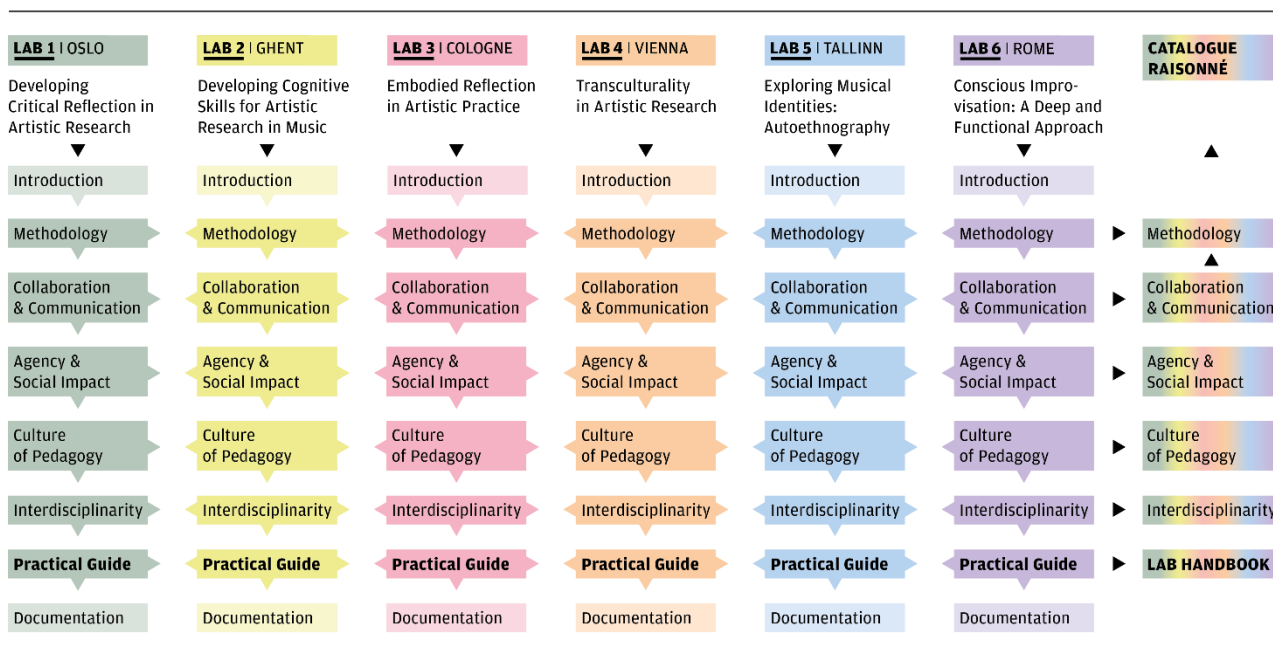


## Visualisation of the conceptual frame

Crucial for the conceptualisation of the Labs has been to foster the individuality of each Lab and the openness to each research approach. On a meta-level this individuality has been made visual by giving each Lab its individual colour and design within the frameworks and the cooperative design of the collaboration:

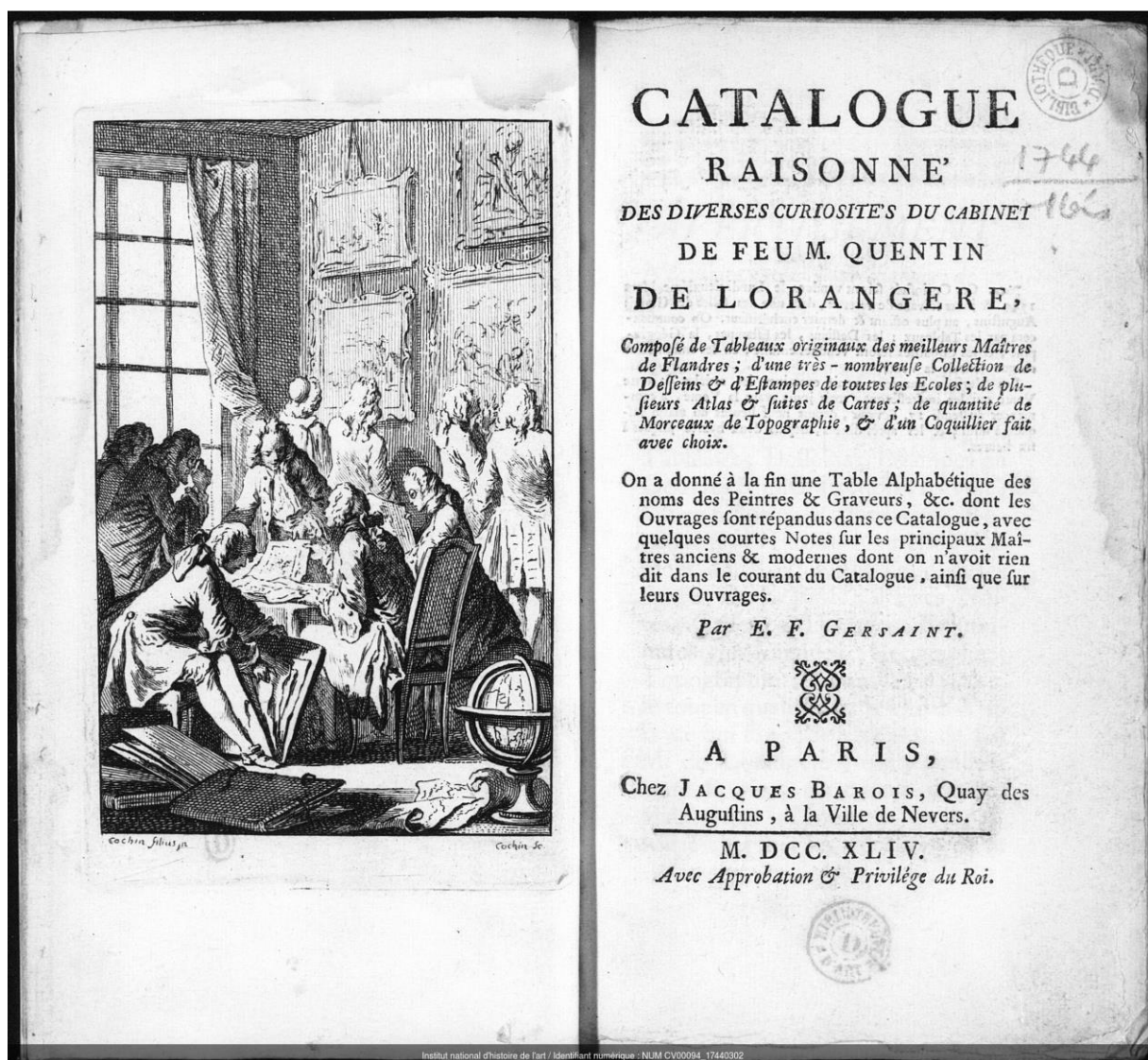


As a conclusion, even the whole concept of the project has been made visible by a graphical matrix:



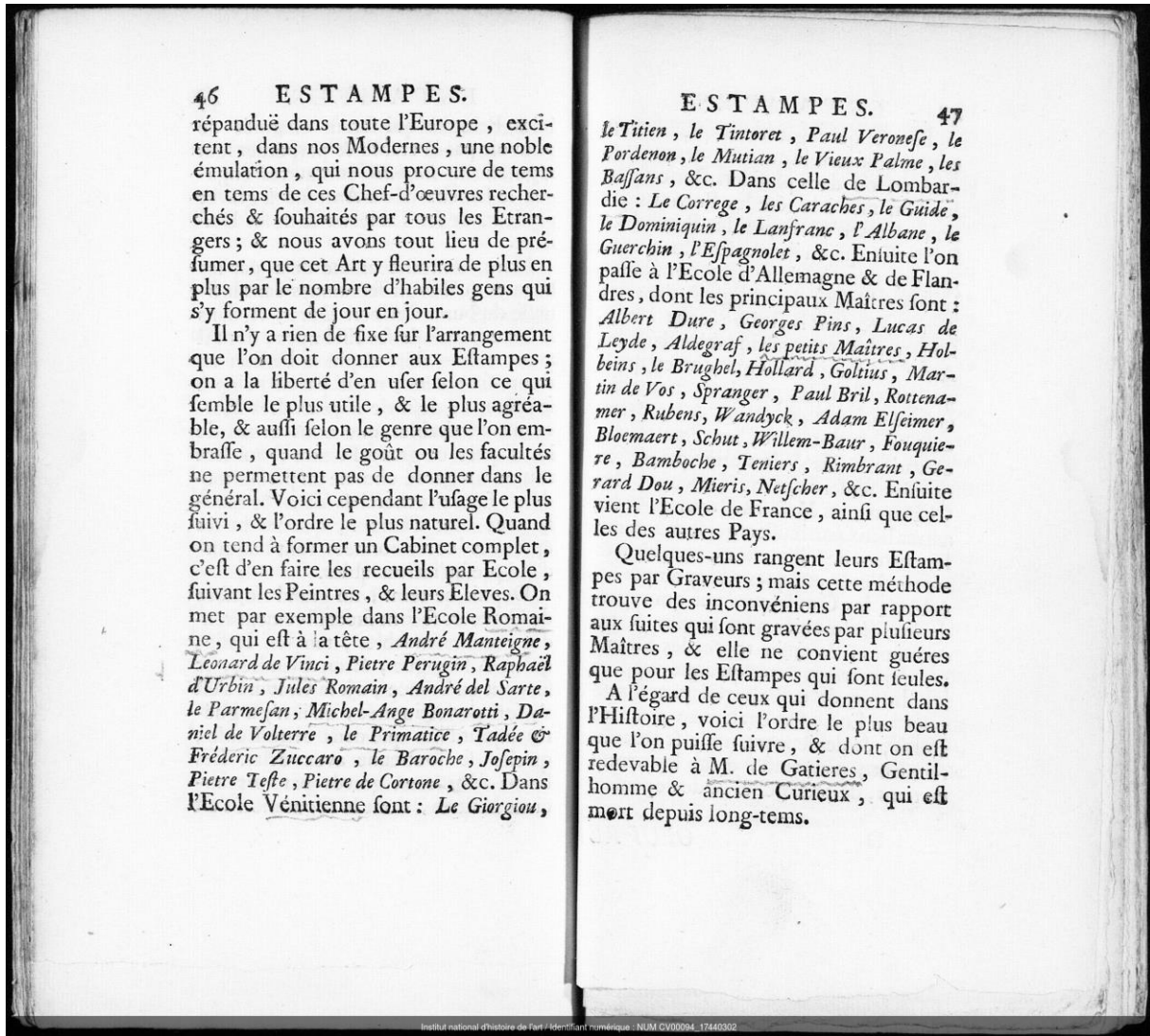
### 3. Principles and Values of RAPP Lab: The Catalogue Raisonné

This project proceeded through a sensible discussion and choice of terms. Additionally to the agreement that there is a need for teaching and learning strategies and examples, RAPP Lab extended the idea of “Guidelines”, which have a rather hermetical connotation, to the idea of a “Catalogue Raisonné”. This description has been adapted from a term rather common in art science to describe a growing source of information and references to the œuvre of an artist:<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> See also: <https://www.nypl.org/about/divisions/wallach-division/art-architecture-collection/catalogue-raisonne> or <https://icra.art/about/catalogue-raisonne/what-is-a-catalogue-raisonne> (both: 14.08.2023)





"There is nothing fixed about the arrangement that we have given ...; we have the liberty of using them in the manner which seems most useful and agreeable"

Edme-François Gersaint, 1744: *Catalogue Raisonné des diverses curiosités du cabinet de feu M. Quentin de Lorangere.* Barois, Paris. p. 46

By referring to this idea of a growing "catalogue", it became possible to preserve all individual outcomes of the Labs, the pedagogical tradition for which they stand for and their specific research ideas. Nevertheless, the following principles and values have been identified as crucial for an overarching conceptual framework within the project:

## Methodology

Culture  
of Pedagogy

Collaboration  
& Communication

Interdisciplinarity

Agency &  
Social Impact

### Methodology

#### 1. Time

space for unexpectedness; reflection is time; time and space in the study programme: it is a question of implementation

#### 2. Different formats

plenary, small groups, open/closed for public, alone

#### 3. Rhythm

of how these formats interrelate with each other (high art of teaching)

#### 4. Documentation

awareness for how to materialize the experiences we gained in the labs and how they can become results and IOs

#### 5. Implementation

Question when to start with AR and which role reflection has for this question

- Critical reflection is also in BA important: deeper engagement into the practice, it doesn't have to be the big issue; it is a chance to not mindlessly just do (no mindlessness-doing or mindlessness repetition)

- Critical reflection is not the final top of something, but an attitude: It is about acquiring skills. We are already creating the filter, of how we will engage into our practice / into our musicianship. Also in BA!
- Individualised study paths instead of skill training; what role can a tool kit for critical reflection have?

## Culture of Communication and Collaboration

### 1. Working climate

- No catwalk of skills but laboratory
- Flat hierarchies/student centred approach; but also moderation, tools for structuring
- System of values: what counts?

### 2. The power of collaboration for reflexivity

- How to collaborate is not self-evident: This is also something to learn and to train.

And: There is no singular practice (no me-search), it is interdisciplinary research and it is about collaborative working (being part of a research process as receiver and giver)

### 3. Reflection as learning from the side / open up the external view

## Culture of pedagogy // skills/professionality/quality:

1. Whole person: critical reflection is a possibility to fill the gap between technique/practice and insecurity/professionality: There always is precarity. Reflection offers an understanding of micro-practices. Aim: The whole person, not just skill!

2. Critically reflect the value of technique: it is not self-worthy

3. Mapping out personality: When does your critical voice comes forward? When not?

4. Awareness for the 'right' measure: no forefinger-pedagogy, no emancipation-laboratory, which in worst case builds up another ideology

5. Training of the teacher: teaching to transgress: How I make you able to make yourself accessible to your own knowledge? What do you do, when you acquire new knowledge?

4. Meta-Level: RAPP Lab's contribution to ...

### Artistic Research and Agency

- How can RAPP Lab contribute to the question of artistic agency: How to become a change agent?
- How can we implement a fluid transgression between studying and working?
- Question the individuality as mastery
- How can we acknowledge diversity and diverse artistic agency
- Failure, clashing, friction as potential: I can also clash in my core business and not find a place and this is not unprofessional. To lose the paths of main-subject of education does not mean to give up.

### Artistic Research and role for society especially in pandemic times

- RAPP Lab can make a proactive contribution for searching, practising and reflection in pandemic times. Search for ways to connect to the "professional". That also means to reflect on: What is our profession?

### Artistic Research and STEAM in a broader interdisciplinary way

- RAPP Lab as a conglomeration to develop tools or evidence, how disciplines can develop when they are allowed to do what they do.
- Artistic Research has the responsibility to ask the institutions about the relationship between training/profession. Multi-perspectivity, the look from the side: How does my field look, when I look on it from your field?
- What are methods of Artistic Research or what methods does Artistic Research unfold?