

## AEC Pop and Jazz Platform (PJP) meeting Leeds College of Music, 12 March 2005

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### Introduction

30 delegates from 21 schools attended the meeting at the Leeds College of Music. At the beginning of the meeting, the delegates presented themselves and their function in the home institution. PJP coordinator Aage Hagen (Rhythmic Music Conservatory Copenhagen) then introduced the objectives and set-up of the AEC Pop and Jazz Platform.

The platform should be open to all AEC institutions with a profound interest in jazz and popular music education, e.g. institutions that are:

- providing programmes in jazz, pop, etc. (programmes in performance, composition, teaching, technology, management, etc.),
- providing courses in jazz, pop, etc. as part of classical music programmes,
- planning to start programmes in jazz, pop, etc. in near future.

The overall objective of the platform is to support and promote jazz and popular music education in European higher music education. The specific aims of the platform are:

1. To collect and exchange general information about pop-jazz programmes of the participating institutions (educational structures, study plans, styles and genres, teaching methods, curricula, special events, etc.).
2. To promote student and teacher exchanges at the European level in this field.
3. To initiate projects, seminars, intensive projects, etc. at the European level about academic issues of didactical nature (curriculum development, styles and genres, teaching and learning, etc.).

In addition, Aage mentioned the following issues:

- Every institution providing a pop and/or jazz programme can become a PJP member. However, the membership must receive the full support of the director of the interested institution. Every member institution will be asked to appoint an academic contact person (e.g. the Head of Department or programme). All PJP communication will happen through the academic contact person (ACP) and the international relations coordinator (IRC).
- The PJP stimulates new initiatives and projects; it is however required to have the full support of your institution before you initiate a new project. It is also important to keep in mind that the institutions themselves must cover the costs for the participation in PJP meetings.

### Exchange of experiences

A short presentation on the AEC was given by Sofie Truwant (AEC project administrator), after which a discussion developed on the experiences with jazz/pop content development and organisation, and with student and teacher exchanges. The following subjects arose:

#### *Student and teacher exchanges*

- Is student exchange at all desirable and if so, how should these be set-up?
- Student exchanges should preferably be done in years 3-5
- In some countries student do not have to pay tuition fee for higher education; this is not the case everywhere, which sometimes creates financial difficulties when organising exchanges.
- The curriculum of one institution can be very different from other curricula, even within the same country. This diversity is basically seen as a positive thing, but there is a need for disseminating knowledge about the curricula, and for understanding the educational ideas behind each curriculum.
- Teacher exchanges work well as preparation for increased student exchanges
- Teachers mainly focusing on their performance career can be easier than fulltime teachers to organise exchanges with, as they have more flexible time schedules. At other times teachers' performing jobs can be an obstacle for the planning of exchanges. Concerts should be included in the planning of teacher exchanges.
- How should the lessons at the home institution be organised when a teacher is away on an exchange? It is recommended that the incoming teacher is invited to teach the course together with the regular teacher which gives the course an added value, and stimulates educational development among the teachers. Students

should be informed about teacher exchanges and the possible effects. Students should accept the advantages of teacher exchanges and not be too rigorous about the overall number of lessons

#### *Effects of the Bologna Declaration*

- The Bologna Declaration is not about restricting curricula; it is about developing a comparable structure for higher education in all European countries, WITH the maintenance of the diversity in Europe!
- We have to develop a liberal attitude if we want to recognise a different programme. How liberal can we be? It was recommended not to be too rigorous about recognition of degrees.
- Within the Bologna Declaration Process it is not only a matter of mobility and exchanging information; it is as well about the transfer of information.

#### *Other issues*

- There is a general lack of funding for jazz and pop activities and a general limitation to the number of students in pop and jazz programmes.

#### **AEC Learning Outcomes**

A presentation was given by Erling Aksdal (AEC Council member) on the 'AEC Learning Outcomes'. This is a document that describes the learning outcomes for the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> study cycles in music (in most countries this corresponds to Bachelor/Master) in the form of competencies, which the student must have acquired at the end of each cycle. Erling has studied this document from the perspective of a jazz teacher and has found that, in general, the document is very well developed and could very well be applied to jazz studies. However, some comments could be made, such as:

- What is meant with "re-creative skills"?
- Is it appropriate to emphasize "repertoire skills" in jazz training?
- Is one-to-one teaching the most appropriate and wishful approach in jazz education?

All PJP institutions were also encouraged too identify a representative from the jazz and/or pop sectors, who could participate in the working groups in the framework of the new AEC project 'Polifonia'. 'Polifonia' will address many issues in relation to professional music training, including professional integration and links to the music profession, and it is essential that the needs and characteristics of the jazz/pop sectors are taken into account. More info can be found at <http://aec.cramgo.nl/> and <http://www.aecinfo.org/polifonia.htm>

#### **How do we proceed with the AEC Pop and Jazz Platform from here?**

The following themes were suggested for discussion during PJP meetings in the future:

- Ensemble seminars including students and teachers
- Composition and production
- The organising of tuition: Group tuition vs. 1-to-1 tuition.
- Development of notion of best practices in teaching
- How to meet the demands of the different genres? Can we develop a generic pop and jazz curriculum, or should we rather establish separate departments for each genre?
- Formal discussion on the creation of teaching and assessment
- Employability and market conditions, the music industry
- Multiculturalism: should a social anthropologist be invited?

#### **Next meeting**

The next meeting will take place on Sunday 11 September 2005 at the Escola Superior de Musica de Catalunya in Barcelona, Spain,

*Report by Sofie Truwant and Aage Hagen*