

Dr Franziska Schroeder, School of Creative Arts

1. CONTEXT FOR THE APPLICATION (approximately 300 words)

Please provide a context for your application. This should consist of an introductory statement about your contribution to learning and teaching/learning support to date. Examples of the information you might include are; the subject you teach or the area of learning support you work in, the type of learning and teaching/learning support activities you are involved in, how many learners are involved, your particular learning and teaching/learning support interests and an outline of your overall teaching/learning support philosophy?

I teach all final year UG performance students as well as performance students at MA level at the School of Music and Sonic Arts. I started teaching at Queen's in 2007 when I was an AHRC Research Fellow in the Creative and Performing Arts.

My main role is to prepare the students for a possible professional career as musicians. My own background as a professional performer who trained at Conservatoire level and continues to perform in national and international context is vital to my teaching philosophy.

It is important for me to show the students that as an academic I have a rich practical knowledge from which, I hope, students learn by example. I often need to negotiate academic responsibilities with my performance commitments, a balancing act that most of my students deal with as well. Throughout my career I have worked with living composers (commissioning new works for saxophones with new technological inputs), and it was this collaborative approach that made me introduce a *performer-composer collaborative project*, where 3rd year performance students are teamed up with final year composition students to engage in such collaborative work. The resulting new works are performed by students as part of their final recitals in June each year. Since 2009 I have also started a *performer-composer-collaboration* between PhD students and myself (see below for more info).

I have a strong belief that students learn through what has come to be termed 'enquiry-based learning' (EBL) a form of learning driven by the process of enquiry. It is an approach that fosters collaborative learning and deep engagement with complex issues. I believe that students learn by being actively and creatively engaged, by being self-directed, by working collaboratively and independently as well as by being stimulated by processes of enquiry.

My teaching philosophy is strongly informed by my own practice as a professional performer and through creating a learning environment into which I bring other visiting international performers. I thus aim to create learning situations that are highly based on practice, that are active, interactive and challenging, and ultimately collaborative and enjoyable.

My teaching approach supports Jackson's argument that,

"narrow, summatively-driven assessment practices and criteria that focus on what is known, which do not recognise the process of learning and how people come to know, or recognise emergent unanticipated learning outcomes, will smother creativity" (Jackson, 2003).

Inspired by Paul Kleiman's ideas as outlined in his inspirational work "Principles of good design. Imaginative Curriculum Guide" (2002), I endeavour for my students to learn by giving valuable feedback to each other, and self assessed components and peer-feedback form an integral part of my teaching approach. (437)

2. DISCUSSION

You should illustrate your discussion throughout with reference to specific learning and teaching activities/learning support activities. You should also provide examples of the influence of learner feedback on your learning and teaching/learning support practice.

(a) Promoting and enhancing the learners' experience (approximately 1000 words)

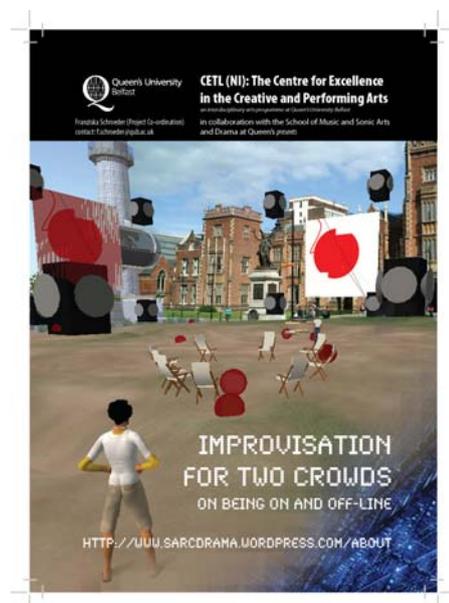
The classes I teach are always student-centred. This even informs the way we sit in the class, where students and the lecturer are seated in semi circles, facing each other rather than in the traditional frontal teacher-student class format. Students are encouraged to ask questions, to share their understandings of personal performance issues, to develop questioning strategies that allow them to identify possible other lines of enquiry. Students are always encouraged to experiment with unusual performance scenarios if they wish to do so. After demonstrating warm-up work in the initial few weeks to my students, I encourage students to take such short warm-up session by themselves in order to learn what it means to 'teach' and to demonstrate to others. Learning by doing is integral to my approach.

GAMES:

Since 2007 I have employed games stemming from theatre disciplines as warm-up activities in order to fuel the students' creative thinking processes, to encourage team building and peer-interaction. For this, I brought in the former artistic director of CETL (Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning) Anna Newell to teach students and myself some of these game based learning approaches. Game play and role-play have become an integral part of my teaching philosophy and it makes sense since performance deals very much with these types of game-based processes. I use these games and warm-up exercise for our School's annual *Ice Breaker sessions* for new students in order to make the transition from school to university less harrowing and more fun. The sessions have proved a real success with students and are essential to the School's recruitment strategy.

NEW TECHNOLOGIES

I am dedicated to the involvement of new technologies in teaching and assessing students. When I started teaching in 2007 I commenced using online blogs for student feedback and exchanges. Students are encouraged to use 'Facebook' to announce their final recitals and other performance events.



In 2009 I used the virtual environment 'Second Life' for an international improvisatory event that involved two international artists (one from a theatre and one from a music background) and students from Music and Drama at Queen's. The project was supported by a CETL Interdisciplinary Projects Fund award, which I received in 2009. This project enabled students from diverse disciplines to work together with two of the most established and recognised educators in the field of improvisation while at the same time exploring vital strategies of virtual environments.

COLLABORATIONS

When I commenced teaching in 2007 I initiated a performer-composer collaborative project, where 3rd year UG performance students are teamed up with final year composition students to work

collaboratively. The resulting compositions are performed by students in their end-of-year recitals in June each year.

Since 2009 I also started working with final year PhD composers at the School of Music and Sonic Arts, working collaboratively on producing new works. With these students I discuss compositional strategies for performers. I work with them on recording materials and I then perform the new works at an annual showcase concert for the students and the public at the Sonic Arts Research Centre (SARC). It is vital to me that the students understand that this type of working method is essential for living performers and composers alike.

The School of Music and Sonic Arts offers weekly lunchtime concerts, and since starting my teaching in 2007 I have co-ordinated a variety of international artists that perform as part of the series to input into student learning. This has meant that every two weeks I am able attract these international visiting performers to be part of my performance classes and to input into students' learning journeys. Musicians have included internationally renowned US vocalist Joan La Barbara and flutist Carine Levin amongst many others.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Engaging the public is important for any performer and apart from performing regularly at the School, as for example as part of our annual contemporary music festival **Sonorities**, or in the School's **Big Band**, I also perform in local Belfast venues such as the **Crescent Arts** (March 2011 next concert).

I have recently been awarded a larger **AHRC grant from the Collaborative Research Training – public engagement** call, which is an award that provides collaborative training provision for doctoral students, while collaborating with the Belfast Children's Festival. The aim of the award (entitled "BIG EARS - Sonic Art for Public Ears"), apart from bringing music and new technologies to the public, is:

- To provide innovative training in public engagement for doctoral students in the performing arts
- To create vital links between the University and a professional arts organisation with invaluable experience in public engagement
- To deliver stimulating ways of teaching communication skills
- To offer skills in designing, managing and planning a project involving a non-specialist public
- To provide hands-on experience in working and designing with a non-specialist public
- To provide opportunities for students to share their research with a wider public
- To provide a collective doctoral student experience

The outcome of this public engagement event will be shown on the 16th of April 2011 at SARC. (836)

(b) Supporting colleagues and influencing support for student/and or learning (350 words)

I see my recently launched collaboration with final year PhD composition students as important input for my colleagues that teach composition, as it gives their student a unique opportunity to write for a professional performer and to have their work performed at an internationally renowned centre for new technologies (SARC) during their student years.

SYMPOSIUM



In 2006 I initiated an annual theoretical symposium (the *Two Thousand +* symposium: <http://www.sarc.qub.ac.uk/~fschroeder/symposium>) on performance and new technologies, and this symposium has been running alongside the Sonorities Festival of Contemporary Music in Belfast since 2006. It has established itself as an internationally recognised symposium for performance practitioners from areas as diverse as music, sonic arts, dance, theatre, new media for the discussion of topics on performance informed by new technologies.

Staff and students at our School benefit from this international forum, and from the high quality theoretical discussions.

For the last two symposia I managed to attract international publishers to exhibit their works and to sponsor the event, but also, and more importantly I have been editing a book in 2009 (Cambridge Scholars) and will be editing a journal (Intellect publication in 2011) that contain these theoretical papers. In this way, colleagues and students benefit beyond the annual event in the form of future theoretical research.

JUNIOR ACADEMY OF MUSIC



Since 2008 I have been part of the steering committee to set up a new Junior of Music Academy at the School of Music and Sonic Arts. This activity was rolled out in September 2010 and teaches children aged 4-8 (the program will be expanded in January 2011 to include children up to the age of 11) musicianship, movement, singing and instrumental playing. Since its inception I have been part of these Saturday morning classes to provide support for the teaching assistants as well as the children and parents. JAM is a vital forum that provides our students with important learning experiences, and we now employ several of our past students for these activities.

OTHER

I am the **Disability Officer** for our School and my role is to liaise between the Disability Office and my colleagues.

In my mentoring role as a member of the advisory committee for the recently launched **Queen's Quarter Weekend** (qqw) initiative, I support a group of QUB postgraduate students that wish to facilitate diverse creative events across the University. This initiative is sponsored by Queen's University.

I also liaise between the School of Music and the **Queen's Welcome Centre** for their bi-weekly 'Out to lunch' events. Several of my performance students provide the music to these events. Establishing this link has been important for my students as it gives them vital performance experiences, and the feedback from the Welcome Centre has been outstandingly positive. I hope to continue this initiative for several years to come.

Finally, I have formed strong links to the **Belfast Music Society (BMS)**. Their annual chamber music festival has provided our students with a highly professional setting to perform in. In 2011 we will be extending the link between the School of Music and the BMS to include poets from the Seamus Heaney Centre at Queen's. Maintaining and developing these kinds of relationships is vital to the School and to support students in their learning and development towards a professional music career. (547)

(c) Ongoing professional development (350 words)

Essential to my own professional development has been, and is the attendance at various Queen's Staff Training events. For instance, I have taken courses on Public engagement, Creativity training provided by Paul Kleiman from PALATINE HE Academy. I have learnt from a course entitled "Giving an Preparing Lectures" as well as from a course on using peer and self-assessment.

Since attending this course I replaced two essays on the analysis of music recordings with a learning journal, a performance diary, in which students give constructive criticisms of other performers and critically reflect on concerts, master-classes and workshops visited throughout the year. The diary allows students to reflect on their approach to their instruments, their playing and personal development during the year. As part of this new assessment item I introduced a self-assessment and a peer-feedback component.

Students' **Feedback Evaluation Questionnaires**, which they are encouraged to fill out at the end of each semester, form a vital part for re-evaluating my teaching and I continuously try to improve my teaching methods based on the students' comments. It is essential to me that I adopt my methods to the suggestions of my students. I take the approach to innovation as an evolutionary one as outlined so poignantly by Hannan and Silver (2000):

Innovation is more evolutionary... Innovators create, adopt, adapt... The adoption of something new developed elsewhere inevitably involves adapting to the needs of students and teachers, resources and environments. Whatever the origins of an initiative, 'in their circumstances' means people interacting, in contexts that include institutional structures and pressures, as well as disciplinary and professional cultures. (In: Kleiman, 2002, p2).

When I started teaching at Queen's in 2007, I attended an eye-opening one-day workshop "Starting out in Assessing Performance at the University Centre Folkestone, run by PALATINE (Paul Kleiman), which has informed a vast part of my teaching approach.

It is vital for me to maintain my career as a professional performer in order to be an example to my students, and apart from recording CDs with international artists (since 2007 I published 2 new recordings), I have performed at events ranging from the European Research Agenda (HERA) meeting in Berlin, at the opening of a newly funded AHRC Centre for Musical Performance as Practice (at Cambridge Concert Hall, 2009), and I will be performing at the Future University Conference, sponsored by the Mellon Foundation, in June 2011.

I will be attending the PGCHET course in January 2011, and will hopefully be hosting one of the Palatine's 'Starting Out' workshops for new and early career lecturers in our School in 2011. (430)

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