

Launching the Nordic Master of Global Music Program

Higher education music institutions in Northern Europe have become internationally known for their effective and innovative approaches in recent years, particularly when it comes to such subjects as conducting, European folk music, jazz studies, and even popular music pedagogy. However, with the exception of just a few institutions in Sweden (specifically, Gothenburg, Malmö and Stockholm), music academies in the Nordic region have generally been rather slow to develop programs for the teaching and learning of non-European music and intercultural aspects of the meeting between European and non-European music in the spheres of musicianship, pedagogy and research. Meanwhile, European societies have been rapidly changing, as Europe becomes both more integrated and culturally diverse (Allemann-Ghionda, 2009; Starkey & Osler, 2009), and at the same time new forms of music are emerging as a consequence of cross-cultural contact and pioneering forms of artistic collaboration. In this article, which is partly based on a recent conference presentation (Hebert, 2010), we are pleased to announce a new program that seeks to open up this field in Europe through international collaboration and sharing of resources among music institutions in three Nordic countries: the Master of Global Music (GLOMAS) program, which is scheduled to begin in Autumn, 2010. The GLOMAS program was conceived and launched within the context of the Glomus Network, which is an international network among a select group of Nordic higher

education academies and their partner institutions.

Glomus Network FOR HIGHER MUSIC EDUCATION

The Glomus Network is an international network for higher education in global music and related arts. As we explain on its website, “Founded by three Nordic higher education academies of music, the GLOMUS network aims to develop collaborative projects to enhance: (1) intercultural communication, (2) knowledge sharing, (3) capacity building and organizational development, and (4) musical interaction for mutual inspiration and innovation” (Glomus Network, n.d.). The range of activities associated with the Glomus Network is rather broad, including:

- (1) Exchanges and fieldwork,
- (2) Online networking,
- (3) Annual Glomus camp,
- (4) Tours (which may be of either performers or lecturers), and
- (5) Database of related research projects.

The founding partners of the Glomus Network include the Royal Academy of Music, Aarhus (in Denmark), Lund University’s Malmö Academy of Music (in Sweden), and Sibelius Academy, (in Finland). There are several prospective partner institutions from outside Europe, with whom formal agreements have already been finalized or are currently under negotiation, including the Higher Institute of Music in Syria, University of Cape Town, University of Ghana in Accra, University

of Cape Coast (Ghana), Eduardo Mondlane University (Mozambique), the Conservatoire des Arts et Métiers Multimédias (in Bamako, Mali), and the Edward Said National Conservatory of Music in Palestine. New additions to the Glomus Network include some prominent American institutions: the Butler School of Music of the University of Texas at Austin, the Boston University School of Music, and the Manhattan School of Music.

Master of Global Music (GLOMAS) PROGRAM

Within the context of the Glomus Network, which will enhance the ease of mobility and international exchange of both music students and teachers, the founding institutions have also launched a new Master of Global Music program (GLOMAS). Below is the text we collaboratively developed within the steering committee to explain this new program on its website (Glomas: Global Music Master Degree, n.d.):

The Master of Global Music (GLOMAS) is a joint study programme offered in collaboration between higher education music academies in three nations: Royal Academy of Music (Aarhus, Denmark), Lund University, Malmö Academy of Music (Malmö, Sweden), and Sibelius Academy (Helsinki, Finland). The programme leads to a Master degree according to each institution's regulations and national legislation. GLOMAS is a highly innovative, interdisciplinary programme that is responsive to new needs arising from globalization in the field of music. The programme emphasizes development of "bimusical" performance skills (typically within at least two traditions from different parts of the world), as well as studies of topics relevant to the career of a professional musician, including such areas as musical leadership and instructional skills, project management, and applied research.

The two-year programme (120 ECTS / 150 ECTS in Finland) is flexible to accommodate diverse student specializations at their home institutions through elective courses and a final project based on personal interests. At

the same time, it is united by a core curriculum of required studies offered jointly through a combination of face-to-face and online courses. Students will occasionally be expected to travel to the other member institutions for joint courses, and will do fieldwork studies (typically during year 2 of their degree) at locations either outside the Nordic region or among ethnic minority communities in Nordic nations. Upon entrance to this programme, students will join an online network developed for the programme to facilitate communication across the three member institutions as well as with advanced students and faculty "in the field" who are already doing music research or performance projects outside Nordic nations or among ethnic minority communities in the Nordic region.

Graduates from this Master degree programme will demonstrate: (1) a high level of comprehensive musicianship that transcends cultural boundaries, (2) knowledge of both traditional and contemporary hybrid music genres, in and outside of Europe, (3) an ability to effectively lead music ensembles, communicate and teach music across a diversity of formal and informal settings, and (4) an ability to successfully develop, document and manage intercultural music projects. The GLOMAS programme seeks to play a transformative role at the level of both individual students and Nordic society, by broadening musicianship and enhancing both intercultural understanding and lifelong music learning, inside and outside of schools.

RATIONALE FOR THE GLOMAS PROGRAM

This new international-collaborative Master degree program seeks through higher education to foster innovative forms of "bimusical" musicianship and intercultural understanding, and is offered as a strategic educational response to music globalization, as well as to the rapidly changing student demographics in urban schools within the Nordic region (Saether, 2008). It may also be understood as arising at least partly through a growing understanding of the changing musical and educational needs in Africa and the Middle East, and recognition of Europe's obligation to

develop nurturing partnerships with the southern hemisphere. In recent decades, the national strategies of Nordic countries have placed greater emphasis on internationalisation, and national ministries see the importance of supporting multicultural initiatives, a position that extends to educational programs. Education is seen as a tool for community development and social integration, while internationalisation is also viewed as advantageous in terms of both economic and diplomatic objectives (Finnish Ministry of Education, 2009). Nordic countries also desire to carry a significant share of global responsibility to support the capacity building of developing countries in such spheres as higher education and culture, including music. In this way, the ethical dimensions of democratic pluralism have also informed the development of this program with an underlying commitment to social justice and community development (Heimonen & Hebert, 2010), yet also—from a much different set of values—the program is simultaneously informed by a very practical awareness of the field of “world music” as a rapidly developing new sector of the global music industry (Womex, n.d.). It has been a uniquely complex task to balance between the diverse kinds of motivations and opportunities that fuelled interest in developing a new program of this kind, and to negotiate its curriculum design, admissions process, and eventual launch across collaborating music institutions in three different nations.

GLOMAS AUDITIONS AND INTO THE FUTURE

We are pleased to report that many outstanding musicians applied to the program in the spring of 2010, with an especially large number at the Sibelius Academy. Auditioning musicians came to us from a wide variety of musical and cultural backgrounds, including a flamenco guitarist with experience playing the Arabic *oud*, an experienced performer of the Kurdish *saz*, a singer and dancer who has been

inspired by living in Ghana, an *avant garde* jazz trumpeter with experience in Indian music, a Tanzanian drummer and dancer, a harpist-songwriter influenced by music of the Andes mountains, specialists in Brazilian percussion, a fiddler and a *kantele* player, to name but a few examples. The launch and ongoing development of the Nordic *Master of Global Music* program is a challenge for the involved academies—both on the teaching side (raising questions like “how do we hire highly competent teachers in a variety of non-European instruments, and what should be the focus of their teaching?”) and on the organisational side (“in which department do we place cross-disciplinary programmes?”). At the same time, this important project has been a great source of inspiration for the curriculum development of pre-existing programs, and we remain convinced that by raising the overall level of cultural diversity and awareness of global musics, we definitely contribute to the development of a more open-minded, stimulating, and inclusive learning environment for everyone at the music academies.

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