

# ARTISTIC CITIZENSHIP

AT THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF MUSIC  
AARHUS/AALBORG



Det Jyske  
Musikkonservatorium  
**The Royal Academy  
of Music**

*“What do you think an artist is? An imbecile who only has eyes, if he is a painter, or ears if he is a musician? (...) Far from it: at the same time he is also a political being, constantly aware of the heartbreaking, passionate, or delightful things that happen in the world, shaping himself completely in their image. (...) No, painting is not done to decorate apartments. It is an instrument of war.”*

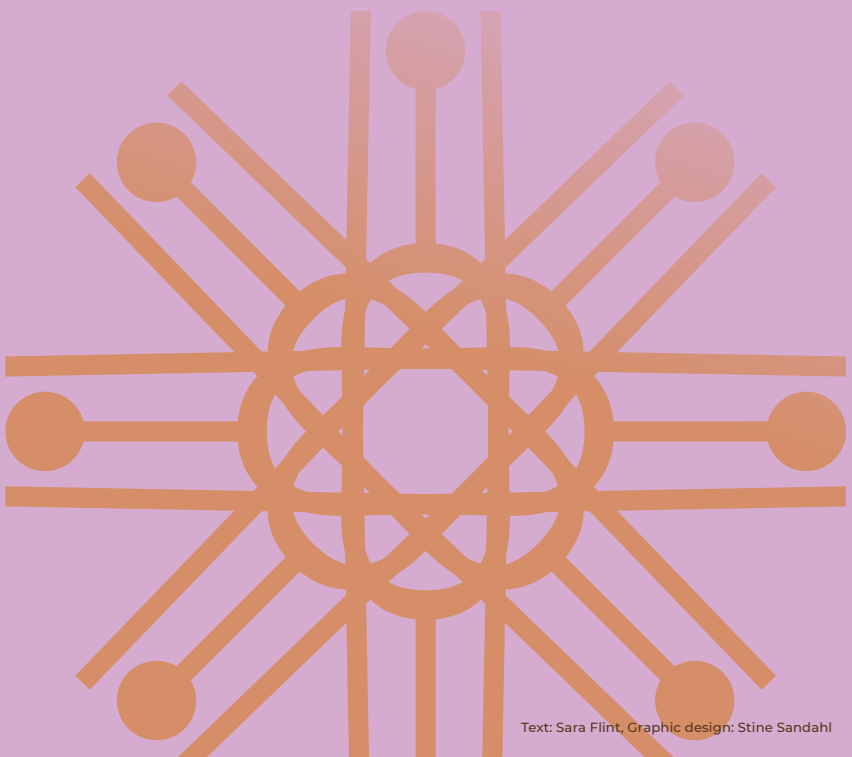
The musician is more than just a musician. She is a craftsman, world citizen and artist, and music is not cut off from the world around it. Music is at the same time relevant and important in society.

The conditions for musicians are changing alongside the rest of the world, and as an academy of music you must keep up with these developments to ensure that you educate your students for a sustainable life as a musician. One way to meet the new con-

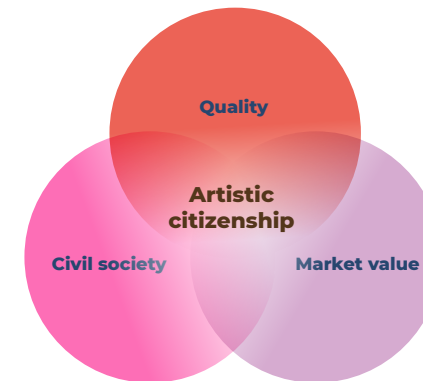
ditions is by focusing on artistic citizenship, which supports both the inherent potential for society in music and the musician's new reality in the labor market. Therefore, artistic citizenship is an important strategic direction at the Royal Academy of Music.

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Since 2019, The Royal Academy of Music (RAMA) has worked purposefully with artistic citizenship as an educational strategy. The concept of 'artistic citizenship' is becoming an increasing part of the debate about music, music education and the role of the musician in society, and the definition of artistic citizenship is multi-faceted. In the following, it will be presented how RAMA understands and works with artistic citizenship.

*"Artistic citizenship is characterized by the competence to create artistic quality in an interplay between the development of one's own artistic practice and an outside world that places increased demands on dialogue and reflection. This paradigm demands an education that offers open and flexible learning environments with a focus on student-centered learning, entrepreneurial competencies, and co-creation" (RAMA Strategy 2019-2022)*

This is a description from the RAMA strategy 2019-2022. It is a world-facing approach, which believes that art can and must play a role in the challenges of society. With artistic citizenship RAMA insists on a democratization of art – not to be misunderstood as a forcing of equal doses of music for all – but as a state where the musician occupies and gets an engaging role in society.

*"When we announce having artistic citizenship as a strategic guideline, we also claim that we want a renewed, courageous and attentive academy of music. We want to be at the frontline of the development towards music educations which engage in the world and equip the students for a life as musicians outside the educations."*

(Keld Hosbond,  
Acting principal at The Royal Academy of Music)

RAMA educates students to have the highest musical ability. Moreover, the ideal is that RAMA just as well educates the students to consider their market value as artists, as well as their relevance in the surrounding civil society. It is a mindset and an approach to music education, which RAMA believes equips the students for a sustainable (working) life as a musician, and at the same time promotes the artistic quality.

We can illustrate it like this:

## Attunement to the audience

Some may ask if the most important task of music education is to train talented musicians. Yes, it is, but RAMA finds it important to educate these talented musicians for more than just traditional concerts. Being able to look beyond the stage and into society requires a unique musical talent and commitment.

When facing the outside world, great demands are made on the musician, and you must be able to tune in to your audience. It requires empathy, courage, situational awareness, and empathy with the audience, while simultaneously keeping in touch with the high artistic level that enables the musician to adapt musical form and expression. By challenging the students to face society with their music, they develop social, human, musical and professional skills.

Pianist, associate professor, and Ph.D. Margrethe Langer Bro explains it like this:

*"I understand artistic citizenship as an approach that transcends people to openness and to take part in a common human context. For the musician the concern is to reach out and through an artistic, personal anchoring and curiosity go into the unpredictable space and seize the common moment in the music."*

(Margrethe Langer Bro)

# MUSIC AND HEALTH

## - ELECTIVE COURSE AT THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF MUSIC

Since 2020, the Royal Academy of Music has had the elective course Music and Health. Pianist, associate professor, and Ph.D. Margrethe Langer Bro teaches the students how to work with artistic citizenship. The students gain personal experience, by playing in contexts outside the academy, e.g. in the penitentiary, in a hospital, in municipal institutions or elsewhere in the community.

The course consists of four elements: 1) Introduction to the academic area and the practical field, 2) preparation, planning and workshop, 3) a six-week internship and 4) a final reflection report and conversation.

The students are introduced to the idea of artistic citizenship, and Margrethe Langer Bro guides the students and inspires them to face the field with an open mind. They are introduced to working methods and organizations who work and interact in the field of music and health.

Through a dialogue-based and practical approach, the students find an internship in

collaboration with Margrethe Langer Bro. Usually the students meet the internship with curiosity and the expectation to make a difference, and there is a great emphasis on the internship being meaningful to the student. The process of establishing the internship is equally important. The students work with idea development, learning to build sustainable collaborative relationships and gain experience in tailoring musical encounters according to the recipient.

In the internship, the students become acquainted with the artistic citizenship in practice. This means various experiences such as deep wonder and curiosity, enormous enrichment, artistic reflection, and development. The students experience the challenges by interacting with the same citizens and employees over time or adapting musical experiences to a given context. They must preserve the artistic integrity while opening up to the recipient. It is a demanding and developing exercise, but an exercise that the students subsequently greatly appreciate:



Photographer: Sara Flint



*The best experience is when I play a piece that fits the patient. Then I know I did my job. Seeing patients reacting to the music makes me happy, even if they cry to it. For me personally, I can feel right away if I have to change the order of the music according to the patient needs. I can improvise and change quickly to other pieces or type of music.*

*The experience in general is a good one... I feel that I am contributing to the society in this way. But I have to say that it is very tiring. It's not an easy thing to see so many people in those conditions. The best thing about this experience is that I feel connected to my soul or life purpose. The point is that I like to help people even if they can't give me anything back and, in this way, playing at the hospital makes it easier to achieve that purpose. The most important thing that I have learned is that music has a tremendous impact on people's moods. I have learned that we as musicians, we have to play for others, we have to share music. Music is not made to stay secret, we don't create it for ourselves, we create and play it for others. With this thought in mind, I can have a better performance on stage at my own recitals.*

(Sebastian Ile student, classic guitar. Extract from reflective journal.)





**Nurse in SOL:**

*"It's like being in a family. When something new happens, we have something to look forward to. And something to talk about. And have a shared experience together."*

**Patient i SOL:**

*"It is allowed just to be yourself when you hear the music, and that is relaxing. It improves the day."*



**Musician in SOL:**

*"As for my professional and artistic awareness, I can say that I have been strengthened in the belief that it makes a lot of sense what we musicians spend a lifetime on. Therefore, I only have good things to say about the SOL project, and hope it finds a place in the future"*

# GATHERING IN LIVE MUSIC (SOL)

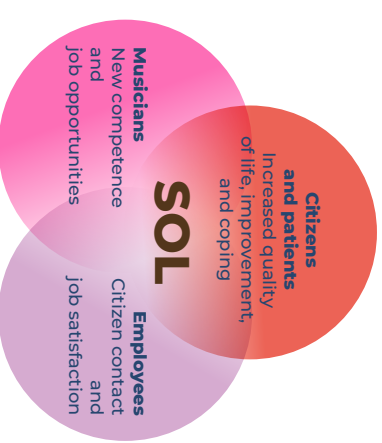
In SOL, The Royal Academy of Music collaborates with Live Music in Schools (LMS), Aarhus Municipality and the Central Denmark Region with the intention of forming an alliance between Danish music and Danish health and welfare initiatives. The purpose of this alliance is to create music experiences for vulnerable citizens, employees around them and for the musicians. The project has shown that through these musical experiences you can create joy of life, security, and personal care.

In the SOL project, professional musicians from LMS have played 78 concerts at dialysis clinics, nursing homes, pediatric wards, and community centers. This generates a common and intimate space between musician, citizen, and employee, and it places great demands on the musician to meet the citizen on his terms and adapt the music according to the situation. It takes knowledge, skills, and ethical considerations to step into a vulnerable field, and therefore it is important that the musicians are educated and prepared for the task. The role of RAMA is to support this professional upskilling of the musicians, and the extensive experience in training musicians in attunement at RAMA is therefore a central

part of SOL. In addition, RAMA is responsible for generating evidence-based science on basis of the project, which can hopefully help expand SOL in the future.

The musical encounter and the listed competencies can break down barriers, create curiosity and a fellowship. Both locally, between patient, musician, and employee, and structurally, between institutions, municipalities, and regions.

Mutual collaboration is a core element when working with artistic citizenship. SOL creates a platform where new communities and collaborations can emerge across professional arenas, and each individual professionalism is strengthened through each other. The starting point is thus threefold and both the citizen, employee, and musician each benefit from the project in their own way.



Photographer: Tomny Foghmar

# COLLABORATION AND CO-CREATION

As mentioned, the previous examples are just a small selection of the work that takes place at the RAMA enrolled around artistic citizenship.

When several professional areas such as music and health meet, it requires a breakdown of the professional silos. Therefore, it has been a priority at RAMA to establish collaborations with municipalities, regions, and other artistic institutions.

Having artistic citizenship as a strategic guideline at an academy of music thus not only creates concrete projects, but also a new area of collaboration, wherefrom new job opportunities for musicians arise. The efforts with artistic citizenship at RAMA are therefore multi-faceted and include a simultaneous focus on individual education and institutional strategies.

This entails a large variety of initiatives at RAMA: All students are getting lectures in entrepreneurship, RAMA is part of NEXT1 which is a new network for academies of music in the Nordic and Baltic countries with a focus on artistic citizenship, international conferences are arranged with artistic citizenship as the focus, and much more. In this way, RAMA contributes in various ways with knowledge and competences to a field in an extensive development, while at the same time educating the students for a sustainable life as musicians.

RAMA believes that with artistic citizenship, good collaborations, curiosity, and courage, you can educate talented musicians to develop themselves and the world.

*“An individual never deals  
with another human being  
without holding some of  
his life in his hand.”*

(K. E. Løgstrup)





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