

“LESEN SIE NUR SHAKESPEARE'S STURM”

SOME CHERISHED QUOTATIONS, THOUGHTS AND AFTERTHOUGHTS
FROM READING ARNOLD SCHERING AND PLAYING LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

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The German musicologist Arnold Schering (1877–1941) was entirely unknown to me until I read the booklet attached to the acclaimed recording of all Beethoven's symphonies by Nikolaus Harnoncourt conducting the Chamber Orchestra of Europe:

What seems important to me – and contemporaries shared this viewpoint – is the conviction that there are mostly sources of inspiration in the music of the great 18th and 19th century composers that lie outside the sphere of music [...] I am convinced that it is only possible to really grasp the essence of any music from these past centuries by regarding it primarily as language. This is one good reason why the Arnold Schering's interpretation of the content of Beethoven's works appealed to me so much when I was a student (as for that matter did his work on Bach too). (Harnoncourt 1991: 12–3)

Throughout his whole life, Arnold Schering was obsessed by visions of great music coming to life by the composer's *ars inveniendi* based on extramusical ideas:

Es ist das Schicksal der Musik, [...] dass sie grössere, entwickelte Formen nicht aus sich selbst hervorzutreiben vermag. Sie bedarf einer Stütze vom Aussermusikalischen her, und die Verschiedenheit der Zeitalter und ihrer Stile leitet sich einzig davon ab, dass – unbewusst oder bewusst – dieses Aussermusikalische einmal in dieser, einmal in jener Region des Geistigen gesucht und gefunden wurde. (Schering 1928: 120)¹

[It is the fate of music, [...] that you cannot trace back more developed forms only to themselves. They need to be supported from extra-musical elements; the diversity of the epoch and styles derived solely from the fact that – unconsciously or consciously – extra-musical aspects were sought and found once in this, once in that region of the spiritual.]

¹ As we are involved here in the delicate struggle between music and words, I would like to avoid any confusion in the language – all German quotations are used in the original language. The English translations have been given just as a help to the reader. Where unspecified, all translations are by the editor.

From approximately 1930 on, Schering started to focus on Beethoven's work – after having explored Johann Sebastian Bach. He wanted to discover the poetical fragments that inspired Beethoven to write his symphonies, sonatas and quartets. This colossal life-work of Schering can mainly be found in the following writings:

1. His early articles:

– 'Die Eroica, eine Homer-Symphonie Beethovens' (1933: 159–77), and

– 'Zur Sinndeutung der 4. und 5. Symphonie von Beethoven' (1934: 65–83);

2. His first book:

– *Beethoven in neuer Deutung (die Shakespeare-Streichquartette opp. 74, 95, 127, 130, 131; die Shakespeare-Klaviersonaten opp. 27/1, 27/2, 28, 31/1, 31/2, 54, 57, 111 und die Schiller-Klaviersonate op. 106)* (1934);

3. *Beethoven und die Dichtung (Mit einer Einleitung zur Geschichte und Ästhetik der Beethovendeutung)* (1936), all 620 pages, where Schering explains Beethoven's music through Schiller, Goethe, Jean-Paul, Tieck, Euripides, Wieland, Torquato Tasso, Homeros and Bürger. Here Schering deals with the seventh and ninth Symphonies; the string quartets opp. 18/4, 59/1–2–3, 132, 133 and 135; the piano trio op. 97; the violin sonatas opp. 30/2, 47 and 96 and the piano sonatas opp. 13, 53, 101 and 110. Unfortunately, Schering dedicated this book *dem jungen Deutschland...* and even a great Beethoven-biographer as Lewis Lockwood only remembers this part of Schering's life: "[a]mong others in Germany who knew better but shamelessly sold out to the Nazi regime was the musicologist Arnold Schering, who in 1934 associated Beethoven with Hitler as a 'Führer-type'" (Lockwood [2003] 2005: 419). To be precise: the name of Hitler is actually never mentioned in Schering's book. And the Nazis could not live anyway with Schering's analysis of their hero Beethoven. Indeed, the concrete vision of their famous and inspired musicologist was too inadmissible to people who saw the composer as an Olympian, a writer of absolute music who did not need any help from extramusical fields;

4. *Zur Erkenntnis Beethovens* (1938) about the piano sonatas opp. 26, 31/3; the piano concerto op. 58; the cello sonata op. 102/1.

Schering refers continuously in his introductions to contemporaries of Beethoven; Ferdinand Ries, one of Beethoven's students said in connection to the composition of the Eroica: "Beethoven dachte sich bei seinen Compositionen oft einen bestimmten Gegenstand, obschon er über musikalische Malereien häufig lachte und schalte, besonders über kleinliche der Art" (Ries [1838] 1906: 91). [Although Beethoven considered programme music (musikalischen Malereien) as a petty art, he often imagined a particular object when composing.]

Carl Czerny, Beethoven's most respected student and later teacher of Franz Liszt, wrote:

Es ist gewiss, dass Beethoven sich zu vielen seinen schönsten Werke durch aus der Lektüre oder aus der eignen regen Fantasie geschöpfte Visionen und Bilder begeisterte, und dass wir den wahren Schlüssel zu seinen Compositionen und zu deren Vortrage nur durch die sich're Kenntnis dieser Umstände erhalten würden, wenn dieses noch überall möglich ware. (Czerny 1842: 62)

[Certainly, Beethoven became enthusiastic about a lot of his most beautiful works through visions and images inspired by readings or created by his lively imagination; if it was still possible to know these circumstances, we would have the interpretative keys to his compositions and to their performances.]

And last but not least some words of one of Beethoven's closest friends, Anton Schindler:

Bereits im Jahre 1816 war es, als Beethoven [...] zu dem Entschluss gebracht wurde, eine Herausgabe seiner sämtlicher Klavier-Sonaten zu veranstalten wozu [...] Veranlassung waren: erstens die vielen jener Werke zum Grunde liegende, poetische Idee anzugeben [...] Ein andermal bat ich ihm, mir den Schlüssel zu den beiden Sonaten op. 57 und op. 31 anzugeben. Er erwiderte: 'Lesen Sie nur Shakespeare's Sturm.' (Schindler 1840: 195)
[Already in 1816, when Beethoven [...] was convinced [...], he was ready to organize an edition of all his piano sonatas, [...] the guidelines were: firstly, to give the poetic ideas underlying to many of those works [...] On another occasion, I begged him to give me the interpretative keys of sonatas op. 57 and op. 31. He replied: 'read Shakespeare's storm.']

This view on the composer's *ars inveniendi* was of course not new at all. Beethoven stood firmly in a long tradition in which Joseph Haydn was one of the leading figures.

Haydn began work by creating some kind of novel or programme on which he could build his ideas and musical colours. In this way, he warmed up his imagination and steered it towards a given goal [...] Be that as it may, a method of historicizing instrumental music rendered him a great service, but he kept it a carefully-guarded secret.² (Carpani 1812: 69)

These last sentences were written by Haydn's piano-partner and biographer Giuseppe Carpani. Haydn didn't keep his secrets always to himself, certainly when they were obvious: he wrote and accepted different versions of *Die sieben letzten Worte unseres Erlösers am Kreuze* but only in the last version (for orchestra, choir and soloists) Christ's words are actually sung and heard. In the foregoing versions for orchestra, string quartet and piano, they were *pronounced* by instruments and only written as a title.

But as the nineteenth century progressed, theories began to be formed that distinguished between *absolute music* and *programme music*. And the leaders of both parties saw Beethoven as their great example – this situation laid the foundation in the second half of the nineteenth century for the so-called *romantic war* between e.g. Wagner, Liszt on one side and Brahms on the other and the dispute was still worse between the admirers of these great composers. This debate only proved to antagonise participants, prejudicing them against the superb music being written from the opposite camp during this time. But we have to acknowledge that Eduard Hanslick's (to quote one of the leading *absolutists*) *tönend bewegte Formen* were part of an imagery that was foreign to Beethoven's world. Czerny wrote in his *Pianoforte-Schule* about the slow movement of the Piano Sonata op. 2/3: "Es ist nicht mehr bloss der Ausdruck von Gefühlen, was man hört, man sieht Gemälde, man hört die Erzählung von Begebenheiten" (Czerny 1842: 30). [What you hear is no longer merely the expression of feelings; you can see paintings, listen to the narration of events.]

Arnold Schering himself labelled his analytical logic *Logik der musikalischen Einfälle* and he was absolutely convinced that, just as he heard and saw this in the music of Bach, the elements of musical speech in Beethoven's music were not to be seen merely as *Affektsymbole* but really as *Symbole*: "[e]s liegt die Überzeugung zugrunde, dass Beethovens Geistigkeit die innere, nicht-gegenständliche Welt des Seelischen

² Translated by Clive Williams.

und die äussere, gegenständliche Welt der Erscheinungen gleichmässig umfasste, indem er das Wesen der einen im Wesen der anderen widergespiegelt fand" (Schering 1934: 12). [It is based on the conviction that Beethoven's spirituality covered the inner, non-representational world of the psyche and the outer, objective world of phenomena while the nature of the one was reflected in the nature of the other.]

Referring directly to one of the piano sonatas, opus 110 in A-flat major, this emblematic piece can serve as an example and thus deserves further scrutiny. Charles Rosen says here: "[o]ne might imagine that there is a programme connected with this work, and that is certainly possible [...] There is a scenario to opus 110, but whether it refers to any real event or literary inspiration we do not know, and it would not help us either to play the piece or listen to it if we could find out" (Rosen 2002: 235). Looking closer at Schering's key for this piano sonata,³ he notes that the sonata is written on two scenes from the tragedy *Maria Stuart* by Schiller. Beethoven confined his choice of scenes to the psychological characteristics of the heroine (Schering refers here to Muzio Clementi's *Didone abbandonata* piano sonata, written in the same year 1821).

– First movement (*Moderato cantabile, molto espressivo*): third act, first scène – the second lyrical monologue–strophe by Maria Stuart: the captive Queen Maria has opened unexpectedly her prison and is enjoying the nature. Schering puts the following Schiller–words under the main theme (bars 1–4): "Eilende Wolken, Segler der Lüfte." [Fast fleeting clouds, sailor of the skies.]⁴

– Second movement (*Allegro molto*): same scène – the third lyrical monologue–strophe by Maria – she hears a hunting–horn.

– Third movement: fifth Act, seventh scène: end of the confession of Maria; scène of the evening–meal; Maria receives host and chalice; Maria receives the absolution from the priest Melvil; he blesses her and promises her enlightenment in the next life.

The peculiar form of this last movement prompted many theories (and quite different performances). It follows a more detailed overview of the structure as Schering read it – from his symbolic point of view.

– Introduction (*Adagio ma non troppo*; bars 1–3):
entrance Maria

– *Più adagio. Recitativo* (bars 4–8):
Maria

Gott würdigt mich, durch diesen unverdienten Tod
Die frühe schwere Blutschuld abzubüssen.
[God suffers for me in mercy to atone,
By undeserved death, my youth's transgressions.]

And I cannot resist adding a fragment of Schering's analysis – his style is irreplaceable:

Das frei deklamierte 'Gott würdigt mich' wirkt ebenso überzeugend wie das lastende 'durch diesen', während zur Begründung der berühmten Tonrepetition auf a" durch die beiden

³ All quotes concerning Beethoven's sonata op. 110 (included Schiller's text) come from: Arnold Schering, *Beethoven und die Dichtung*, Berlin 1936, pp. 521–47. Where not differently indicated, the English translation of *Maria Stuart* is that by the late Joseph Mellish, who appears to have been on terms of intimate friendship with Schiller (translation retrieved May 4, 2009 from <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/6791/6791.txt>).

⁴ Free English translation.

Worte 'unverdienten Tod' an des Lesers und Spielers reifes Innenleben appelliert werden muss. Um eines blossen pianistischen Effekts willen hat sich Beethoven die Mühe einer so sorgfältigen Notierung der Stelle gewiss nicht gemacht. Unsere Pianisten plegen sie als Andeutung einer getarnten 'Bebung' auf dem Pianoforte aufzufassen, als ob damit eine Spielmanier des längst verschwundenen Klavichords hätte wiedererweckt worden. Das trifft die Sache nicht. Es ging Beethoven um andere Dinge. Sein glühend mitfühlendes Herz empfindet die unerhörte Demütigung, die in den Worten 'unverdienten Tod' liegt, so stark, dass er in diesem Augenblick selbst von äusserster Realistik nicht zurückschreckt und einen Töneausbruch vorschreibt, der bei völliger Auflösung der Taktordnung ein Letztes an fassungslos gellendem Aufschluchzen gibt. Welche Kühnheit! Liegt nicht etwas ähnliches in dem 'Töt erst sein Weib' der am Rande der Verzweiflung stehenden Leonore? In den Akkordgreueln der Durchführung der Eroica, wo der Gegner zermalmt zu werden droht? Beethoven wusste, was er tat, wen er die vor- und nachher normal deklamierende Pseudosingstimme in diesem Augenblick beinahe naturalistisch aufschreiben lässt und das Ganze, um ihm diese Symbolik zu sichern, mit einer Fülle von Vortragszeichen ausstattete. Kaum eine zweite Stelle seiner Klaviermusik zeugt von einem ähnlich schweren Ringen um plastische Wiedergabe des gemeinten. Was von einer Sängerin seiner Zeit kaum zu verlangen gewesen, dem Klavier durfte er es ohne Bedenken zumuten. Aber eben doch nur an diese einzigen Stelle, die den Höhepunkt der Tragik im Leben der unglücklichen Königin bildet. Diese Erkenntnis ermächtigt den Spieler, hier dramatisch so kühn, wenn auch immer massvoll, vorzugehen, wie er es im Rahmen der übrigen Darstellung für angemessen hält. Auf alle Fälle fort mit der sentimentalisch wimmernden 'Bebung' als blossem Klaviereffekt! Mit der absteigenden Achtelbewegung, die bemerkenswerterweise (nämlich gegenüber dem Schluchzen vorher) ketzt wieder normal als 'cantabile' gefordert ist, löst sich der Krampf. Nur auf dem Worte 'Blutschuld' (tenuto) zuckt das Herz noch einmal zusammen. Tonlos (smorzando) erstirbt der Schluss der Rede auf abwärts gerichteter Rezitativklausel.

[The freely declaimed '*Gott würdigt mich*' seems just as convincing as the oppressive '*durch diesen*', while in order to justify the famous repetition of a" by the two words '*unverdienten Tod*', it has to be drawn on reader's and performer's mature inner thoughts and feelings. Surely, Beethoven did not notate this passage carefully for the sake of a mere pianistic effect. Our pianists consider it as an indication of a disguised '*Bebung*' on the piano, as if the style of playing of the long time ago disappeared clavichord would have been reawakened. This is not the case. Beethoven is interested in something else. His passionate and sympathetic heart so strongly feels the enormous humiliation lying in the words '*unverdienten Tod*', that, even in this moment of extreme realism, he does not shrink from demanding a breakout of tones. This generates a last piercing and bewildered sob by means of a complete dissolution of the bar. What an audacity! Is there not something similar in Leonore's '*Töt erst sein Weib*' when she is on the verge of desperation? Or in the horror of chords of the development of the Eroica, where the enemy is threaten to be pulverized? Beethoven knew what he did when he inserted this almost naturalistic cry before and after a normal declaiming voice and he provided the whole with an enormous amount of exterior signs in order to secure this symbolism. Hardly another passage of his piano music shows a similar struggle for the vivid reproduction of intentions. What in his time was hardly expected even from a singer, he did not hesitate to demand to a piano. Nevertheless, this

happens only in this specific place which describes the climax of the tragedy in the life of the unfortunate Queen. This cognition authorizes the performer, here dramatically so bold though always modest, to proceed in the way she considers to be, in the context of the surrounding representations, the most appropriate one. In any case, go ahead with the sentimental and pathetic '*Bebung*' intended as mere pianistic effect! With the descending movement of quavers, which remarkably (i.e. compared to the previous sobbing) returns to normality since a '*cantabile*' sound is demanded, the spasm is removed. Only in the words '*Blutschuld*' (*tenuto*) the heart leaps again. The conclusion of the speech tonelessly dies down through the downwards-directed final part of the recitative.]

And Schiller's tragedy continues:

– *Arioso dolente* (I) (bars 9–27):

Melvil (macht den Segen über sie):

So gehe hin und sterbend büsse sie!
Du fehltest nur aus weiblichem Gebrechen,
Dem sel'gen Geiste folgen nicht die Schwächen
Der Sterblichkeit in die Verklärung nach.

[Melvil (making over her the sign of the cross):

Go, then, and expiate them all by death;
Sink a devoted victim on the altar,
Thus shall thy blood atone the blood thou'st spilt.
From female frailty were derived thy faults,
Free from the weakness of mortality,
The spotless spirit seeks the blest abodes.]

Fuga (I) (bars 27–114):

Ich aber künde dir, kraft der Gewalt,
Die mir verliehen ist, zu lösen und zu binden,
Erlassung an von allen deinen Sünden!
Wie du geglaubet, so geschehe dir !
(Er reicht ihr die Hostie)
Nimm hin den Leib, er ist für dich geopfert.
(Er ergreift den Kelch, der auf dem Tische steht, konsekriert ihn mit stillem Gebet, dann reicht er ihr denselben. Sie zögert, ihn anzunehmen, und weist ihn mit der Hand zurück).
[Now, then, by the authority which God
Hath unto me committed, I absolve thee
From all thy sins; be as thy faith thy welfare!
(He gives her the host)
Receive the body which for thee was offered.
(He takes the cup which stands upon the table, consecrates it with silent prayer, then presents it to her; she hesitates to take it, and makes signs to him to withdraw it).]

L'istesso tempo di Arioso (Arioso dolente II – bars 114–136):

Nimm hin das Blut, es ist für dich vergossen!
Nimm hin ! Der Papst erzeigt dir diese Gunst!
Im Tode noch sollst du das höchste Recht
Der Könige, das priesterliche, üben!
[Receive the blood which for thy sins was shed,
Receive it; 'tis allowed thee by the pope
To exercise in death the highest office
Of kings, the holy office of the priesthood.]

Fuga (II – all'inverso – bars 137–173):

(Sie empfängt den Kelch.)
[(She takes the cup).]

Fortsetzung und Schluss der Fuge (bars 174–end):

Und wie du jetzt dich in dem ird'schen Leib
Geheimnisvoll mit deinem Gott verbunden,
So wirst du dort in seinem Freudenreich,
Wo keine Schuld mehr sein wird und kein Weinen,
Ein schön verkürter Engel, dich
Auf ewig mit dem Göttlichen vereinen.
[And as thou now, in this his earthly body
Hast held with God mysterious communion,
So may'st thou henceforth, in his realm of joy,
Where sin no more exists, nor tears of woe,
A fair, transfigured spirit, join thyself
Forever with the Godhead, and forever.]

This programme is as moving as the music. Was it not Beethoven who reported to his friend Karl Holz: "eine Fuge zu machen ist keine Kunst ; ich habe deren zu Dutzenden in meiner Studienzeit gemacht. Aber die Phantasie will auch ihr Recht behaupten, und heut'zu Tage muss in die althergebrachte Form ein anderes, ein wirklich poetisches Element kommen" (Schering [1935] 1974: 112)? [To compose a fugue is no art; during my studies I composed thousands of fugues. But also the imagination stands up for its rights, and nowadays a truly poetic element has to come in the traditional forms.]

It is not easy (and very personal) to say whether this programme changes our contemporary attitude to the score or not. But I had certainly the impression that Schering's interpretation consolidated most of the inner images I already had when practising this sonata. One of the greatest values of Schering's attitude to analysis is without doubt his courage to look for what Beethoven wrote, not for how his music is written. This courage has of course draw backs, but I like the saying of Harnoncourt that the biggest successes happen on the edge of the catastrophe.

Where the classical analysis is mostly confined to the skeleton of the score, Schering tries to give an idea of the whole living body, by touching a part of our analyzing brain that is closest to the direct musical experience itself: explaining art with art. Otherwise do we agree with a (superficial) lecture of Hanslick's writings and *tönende Formen* and is form equal to the content?

Regarding another *holy* work, the *Arietta* from the piano sonata opus 111, Wilhelm von Lenz used the word *Ergebung*, Hans von Bülow called it *Nirvana*, Richard Wagner said *himmlisch*, Claudio Arrau talks about 'mystical ecstasy' (Kaiser 1975: 610–11) and maybe Alfred Brendel was very close when he wrote down that the last chord of the *Arietta* does not close something: it opens the silence (Brendel 1977: 63). Other great words can be found in the eighth chapter of Thomas Mann's *Doktor Faustus*, where the sonata is masterfully analysed by a certain Wendell Kretschmar (with certain similarities to Theodor W. Adorno). What does Schering say?

This is a dream–vision of Queen Catharina, from *Henry VIII* by Shakespeare:

Ein Traumgesicht. Es kommen, feyerlich nach einander hereinschwebend, sechs Personen in weisser Kleidung, die auf den Köpfen Lorbeerkränze, goldene Masken auf den Gesichtern, und Lorbeer– oder Palmzweige in den Händen haben [...] Katharine Seht ihr nicht eben itzt eine selige Schar mich zu einem Gastmahl einladen, deren helle Angesichten, gleich der Sonne, tausend Strahlen auf mich werfen? Sie versprachen mir ewige Glückseligkeit und brachten mir Blumenkränze, die ich zu tragen mich noch nicht würdig fühle...⁵

[The vision. Enter, solemnly tripping one after another, six personages, clad in white robes, wearing on their heads garlands of bays, and golden vizards on their faces; branches of bays or palm in their hands. [...] Katharine No? Saw you not, even now, a blessed troop invite me to a banquet; whose bright faces cast thousand beams upon me, like the sun? They promised me eternal happiness; and brought me garlands, Griffith, which I feel I am not worthy yet to wear...]⁶

This was the *key* for Arnold Schering – in his article 'Musikalische Symbolkunde' (1974: 98–119) he expresses his ideas in a more general way: “[d]as Symbol knüpft zwischen Klanggeschehen und Menschenhirn ein Band, das nicht anders als mystisch genannt werden kann. Diese Erkenntnis ist uralte. Und die Wiege der Musik hat das Geheimnis gestanden, und ihren Gang durch die Jahrhunderte haben Mystik, Magie und Wunderglauben begleitet.” [The symbol links sound events with the human brain, in a way which can only be described as mystical. This cognition is ancient. And the cradle of the music has maintained the secret, and its course through the centuries has accompanied mysticism, magic and belief in miracles.]

A scientist expressing these essentials in such a beautiful way receives my unconditional love and respect as a musician.

How do we listen to music anyway? According to Luigi Nono, it is almost an impossible task: “[l]istening to music – it is a rare phenomenon nowadays. We listen to literary things, we listen to what has been written about, we listen to ourselves in a projection.”⁷ But Schering comes very close to the 'impossible' as he stresses the magical, symbolic layers in music.

The real key to Beethoven – if such a thing exists – can only be found with the ears, with changing listening attitudes through changing times. Or we can play it... As Helmut Lachenmann paraphrased Wittgenstein: “Worüber man nicht sprechen kann, muss man spielen.”⁸

5 Shakespeare's text, translated by Eschenburg, quoted in: Arnold Schering, *Beethoven in neuer Deutung*, Leipzig 1934, p. 96.

6 William Shakespeare, *Henry VIII*, act four scène two, from http://www.shakespeare-literature.com/Henry_VIII/13.html (accessed 4 May 2009).

7 Lecture given in Genève on 17 March 1983 – it can be found as attached cd-recording in: Nono, Luigi (2007) *Ecrits* (ed. Laurent Feneyrou), Genève: Contrechamps.

8 Helmut Lachenmann about his piano work *Serynade* (cd booklet COL LEGNO 20222, 13).

Ascolta is a central word and message in Nono's visionary opus magnum *Prometeo*. Prometheus was also important to Beethoven, as we can hear in *Die Geschöpfe des Prometheus*. It is at least curious that Schering did not use this mythological theme. Other musicologists – like Constantin Floros – would do it later.

Let's continue to listen, to play, and to enjoy our magical mysteries.

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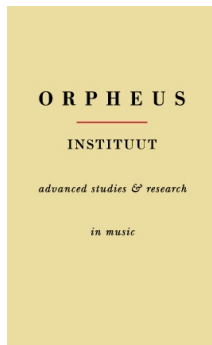
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The **ORPHEUS INSTITUTE** has been providing postgraduate education for musicians since 1996 and introduced the first doctoral programme for music practitioners in Flanders (2004). Acting as an umbrella institution for Flanders, it is co-governed by the music and dramatic arts departments of all four Flemish colleges, which are strongly involved in its operation.

Throughout the Institute's various activities (workshops, masterclasses, seminars, interviews, and associated events) there is a clear focus on the development of a new research discipline in the arts: one that addresses questions and topics that are at the heart of musical practice, building on the unique expertise and perspectives of musicians and constantly dialoguing with more established research disciplines.

Within this context, the Orpheus Institute launched an international Research Centre in 2007 that acts as a stable constituent within an ever growing field of enquiry. The **ORPHEUS RESEARCH CENTRE IN MUSIC [ORCIM]** is a place where musical artists can fruitfully conduct individual and collaborative research on issues that are of concern to all involved in artistic practice. The development of a discipline-specific discourse in the field of artistic research in music is the core mission of ORCIM.

Within the global framework of Orpheus Institute's research and publishing activities this series of web-based publications is a flexible and necessary complement to 'the Writings of the Orpheus Institute' and its 'Subseries'. The series represents an interesting variety of valuable research documents and unique source materials. The texts are commissioned by the Orpheus Research Centre in Music.