

New Performative Practices

NPP



Review report

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Introduction

This report is written as part of the SKH's educational quality and assessment program regarding the Master in New Performative Practices (NPP). The report is based on a peer review process which has been conducted by an international assessment committee consisting of Tinna Joné (SE), Márcio Carvalho (PT) and Søren Flor (DK). The primary task of the committee has been to evaluate the master program in order to ensure its quality as well as supporting its future development.

As is the case in all parts of society the review process in 2020 has been affected by the Covid19 pandemic. As a result all meetings and interviews have been conducted online, and the planned visit on site had to be cancelled. Accordingly, the conclusions and recommendations from the committee are based on zoom-meeting with the NPP program leader and staff, 5 online video interviews conducted with informants chosen and interviewed by the committee (2 students, 1 alumnus, the founder and 1 teacher)¹ a self-evaluation report² and other documents such as appendix and some of the policies from SKH.

This has, regrettably, prevented a firsthand and real-life sensory experience of the program to

1 Zoom-meeting with NPP Staff: August 19 2020.
Videointerviews: Teacher: Tove Salmgren (October 7, 2020), Students: Katarina Eriksson and Csilla Hodi (October 7, 2020), founder Cecilia Roos (October 14, 2020)
Alumni: Pavle Heidler (October 21, 2020)

2 Self-evaluation report for the Master's Programme New Performative Practices at Stockholm University of the Arts, June 2020.

form part of the committee's review process. It is the hope of the review committee that in the nearest future it will once again be possible to move safely and freely across borders thus allowing for a future physical site visit. These limitations notwithstanding, it has been both highly inspiring and interesting to look into a relatively newly formed Master program (2011) and to have had the opportunity to deliver input to an ambitious program, which currently appears highly convincing when it comes to both its relevance, its spirit of curiosity and its progressiveness within its field.

All in all, the review committee supports the areas for further development as they have been suggested in the self-evaluation report of NPP.

In the following the report will present and expand on a range of strengths as well as potential areas of improvement within the seven different areas of inquiry that SKH has pointed out:

- Preconditions
- Design – implementation and results
- Sustainable development
- Broadened recruitment and wider participation
- Collaboration and working life
- Gender equality
- Student influence

The report will finally end by presenting some perspectives and suggestions to improve the educational quality assessment program/procedures at SKH.

Preconditions

Strengths:

NPP demonstrates interest in a relevant mix of both permanent staff and guest teachers. The primary criterion for hiring teachers and artists is less based on their educational level and more in their strong practical relations with inquiry; which brings to the program a variety of skill sets and experiences needed for specific parts of the programs and courses. It's a strength the diversity of transmitting methods of enquiry that teachers and artists make available to artistic practitioners who may be working with other art forms. The program manager and the three permanent teachers contribute with continuity and the development of the choreographic and performative outlook of the master program. Given the many guest teachers this produces collaboration and mutual engagement among artists/teachers allowing for the program to present the students with a variety of methods, research and perspectives on artistic theory and practice. The students themselves stress the specific competencies and backgrounds of the teachers as an invaluable strength of the program. As an example, the students coming from a dance background point to the presence of Chrysa Parkinson among the group of teachers to be the reason why they have applied for the program in the first place. Parkinson is a well known and internationally esteemed dancer and choreographer, and thus represents to the students a guarantee that they will receive high quality education. Furthermore, the program appears to have a nuanced and conscious approach to the curriculum and its ongoing development (use of study materials). Literature is updated regularly, and a multi-modality approach is applied across the different courses, introducing to the students a broad range of aesthetics and media-expressions. Considering the purpose of the program it is considered particularly relevant and positive that the students are met with such a varied curriculum (study materials).

Digital learning platforms are used at the

program, not only because of the current need for digital learning (due to Covid19), but also because the program prioritize that students should be able to participate via distance learning. Despite Covid19 and the need for digital teaching methods, students highlight the "physical encounter" between teachers and students as absolutely essential. In other words, the teachers experience, knowledge and network are experienced as the core of the "study material":

The encounters between artists are the main study material, I think (student, video-interview)

Recommendations - Areas for development:

The reputation of the program has grown in dance-circles and it now receives more attention and a higher level of applicant (with more international performing experience) than it does of other types of choreographic/performance artists and than it has received in the past, according to Chrysa Parkinson in her comments to the assessment group. This is something communication department of the University can and should address. Currently, the communication department does not publicize the education's application period in visual arts venues, (online) magazines. The head of programme has requested publicity support from the communications department that should be followed up.

About half to one third of the group have other backgrounds besides dance.

Many of the artists in the current cohort, as with all NPP cohorts, have practices that blur the boundaries between disciplines, although they identify as dance-artists. As mature performers, they often develop expertise in other performance practices over the course of their careers (voice, theater, music). It is misleading to call the NPP group homogenous in relation to their artistic practices, according to Chrysa Parkinson in her comments to the assessment group. But the education wants to be interdisciplinary and to accommodate students with an artistic practice other than dance - it should be a priority in both the recruitment, the educa-

tional design/facilities and in the employment of teachers. There is, as the assessment group understands it, currently a clear predominance of students that identify as dance-artists. One student with a background as visual artist emphasizes in the interview that it is a challenge and that she wonders, why she was admitted:

I think it's been challenging that I am the only person not coming from the dance and choreographic field, because all my classmates are from there (...) I am curious why they accepted me because I think, maybe I am just used as an "object" to show they (the program), are diverse, because I am really different and then I think - maybe no one else was applying from outside of dance (laughter) (student, video-interview)

NPP shares premises with Department of Dance Pedagogy. There are various studios available - particularly suitable for dance and in addition rooms that can be booked for individual/group work. The students confirm in interviews that the studios are particularly suitable for dance and that it can be problematic to find space for independent work - both in terms of time/coordination, but also to find spaces/equipment that meets and supports an artistic practice other than dance. We recommend a discussion among the departments in order to anticipate clash and to make the collaboration more efficient.

And that it will also be an advantage for NPP to focus on external collaborations. It can provide an opportunity to move artistic projects/practices out of the house, so that it is not the specific studios and internal overbooking that sets the limits. There was a problem about outside studio prices. It seems that organizations that hold studios would make very high prices for the university (videointerview, teacher). Perhaps students could be entitled to arrange the students and the school would pay a production fee for the studios.

Design, implementation and results

Strengths:

Overall, the program is well-structured, and it is taken into account that the students are already "mature" artists, who in various ways need to develop in their artistic practice. The program has a built-in flexibility and a purpose to meet and challenge the individual student's reflection on his/her own and others' practice and on the role and ethics of art and the performer in a cultural and social context. The program prepares the students for research, creates awareness of their own learning and supports them in their continued development as individual (critical) artists and in how they can maintain and develop their practice

The national learning goals (NILO) are clear and integrated in the course content as well as in evaluation and examination practices. Continuous and reflexive feedback methods and student evaluations are applied in order for the students to have influence on the program/course content. There is a built-in progression in the syllabus and a well-functioning and close collaboration between the program-leader Chrysa Parkinson, associate professor Tove Salmgren and professor Frank Bock. It is also perceived as a strength that permanent teachers follow the students throughout both years. In this way relationship is formed, which makes it possible to follow more closely the individual student's artistic development.

The collaboration with the Research Center seems well-established and fruitful and the students express in video interviews that it is relevant and rewarding to meet/collaborate with Ph.D. students.

Recommendations - Areas for development:

While the collaboration with the Research Center is well-functioning, the establishment of a structured collaboration with the other MA programs at SKH has not yet been achieved. According to the review committee, this seems like an obvious area for further development, as SKH has several MA programs within the performative/artistic field such as performing arts, circus and another MA in choreography.



First, a cross-disciplinary collaboration would offer the students the opportunity to establish networks and collaborations, second it would serve strengthen the interdisciplinary ambitions, which are already highlighted as a value and vision in NPP's formal purpose statement.

The collaboration with the other MA programs seems to be challenged practically and logistically. Challenges which will call for further resources to be solved. Similarly, there are some structural challenges regarding the time frame for the application procedure and admission of students to NPP, which, among other things, have consequences for the elective courses in the form of fewer options for the students. The question is whether the optional courses are in fact an option, or but a vision within the education program? The self-evaluation report shows that many students choose the same creative writing course. This could give rise to

the consideration whether this reflects simply a shared interest among the students, or whether it is rather an expression of other factors such as a poor range of subjects to choose from, a limited degree of communication around the courses offered or other structural challenges?

In the video interviews one student airs that as an NPP student, one does not receive support to apply for courses outside SKH.

"I just applied for another course at another university, and I just try to make it myself (...) I don't get the support to go to other universities, they (NPP) doesn't support that. It was a classmate who told me that she took part in a very interesting course at another university and then I got the idea, that I could also tjek all the other (universities) that offer these free-standing courses. (student, video-interview)

The students express that Chrysa Parkinson is a key figure in the program. She is experienced as having a strong, professional and innovative personality. It is in many ways a strength to the program - but it may also be worth considering the disadvantages of making the program so dependent on individual personalities?

Due to the fact that the NPP program works at the crossroads between theory and practice, they have a unique opportunity and obligation to contribute to a **broadening of the academic discourse**. The program presents practical/physical/sensory research methods and from this NPP should be able to develop, test and convey more practically based methods and expressions than what is otherwise offered within classical academic discourse. Furthermore, it seems obvious for the program to continuously develop and capitalize from their frontrunner position when it comes to their peer-to-peer teaching methods (peer-to-peer feedback, peer-to-peer collaboration etc.). Both current and former students highlight study groups and mutual exchange with peers as essential to their development and their benefits of the program. It is therefore a recommendation to develop this area and to communicate more widely and clearly the experiences coming from this egalitarian (non-hierarchical) approach to knowledge, production and learning.

The self-evaluation report points to the value of inviting performers and choreographers with an artistic practice outside-studios as teachers. This is a development area that the review group supports, as it can partly open up to talk about alternative spaces and provide new perspectives and methods for outside-studio practices - and at the same time support the development of the interdisciplinary.

In several of the video interviews, the students highlight “peer-to-peer” and the potential in letting the students “teach” each other or create more informal learning spaces (non-organized). The point is that many of the students comes with competencies and experiences that the program can make benefit from.

We realised that we have a lot capacities and also one of my classmates is a teacher herself in another institution (...) parallel with the organized and mandatory stuff we can initiate whatever we as a group feel there is a need for, there is extra things that we organize within ourself – just because we have this connection through the education. (student, video-interview)

Because we were also physical trying each other practices there were moments were nobody knew what their “primary” medium was and in that there was a kind of – a sense of elevation and definitely excitement and I remember that we start doing many things together, we organized a festival, a cinema group and a bunch of public events (...) we became very vocal about that and what was happening (...) we were producing knowledge because all of us were coming up with stuff and we were making stuff. (alumni video-interview)

Sustainable development

Strengths:

NPP is aimed towards students that are established artists and the Master students articulate their own artistic practice during the course of study. They can do this by pursuing a single project during the full time of their studies, by including their current artistic process as part of their studies, or by following through and keeping track of what accumulates and becomes evident to them as essential to their artistic work during the education.

Physical, live-performance practices are studied for the development of relationships to audience, perceptions of the performer’s role in society, and a critical, ethically viable relationship to the continuous unfolding of live performance. The individual artist’s development of a personally sustainable practice is studied in dynamic relation to society’s demands, understanding and respect for artistic practice.

At the end of their education NPP students are expected to be able to articulate what constitutes their artistic practice, how that practice relates to current practices in their artistic

field(s), the boundaries of their knowledge and what conditions they need to sustain their artistic practice. This aids them in continuing their professional work and developing a more sustainable professional life and NPP promotes **sustainable artistry** in the long term.

The program also discuss how it promotes sustainable **use of resources**. International travel has been a consistent aspect of first and second-cycle educations in dance, partly because the art form invites interaction beyond the specificities of shared language. The climate crisis poses a challenge to this way of working. There is an ongoing work to find ways of structuring teaching, and selecting teachers, to attempt to lessen the needed traveling by teachers. And there has also been an on-going discussion about the structure of the program to ensure that travel is needed to a lesser extent from the students.

Since Covid-19 there has been an extreme increase in online classes. The self-evaluation report points to pros and cons of these **online formats which** promise to be a fascinating area of study, research and implementation on ethical, aesthetic, relational and technical levels. NPP needs to continue to develop effective, participatory media for interaction between lecturers and students at a distance. In order for on-line seminars and lecture series to continue to be part of the program, secure modes of online sharing must be established (re: GDPR). Since Fall 2019 NPP has used Canvas as its shared platform. During the Covid-19 health crisis, NPP began relying on the Research Catalogue as an artistically flexible platform for uploading artistic work and documentation. Zoom has also been an important tool.

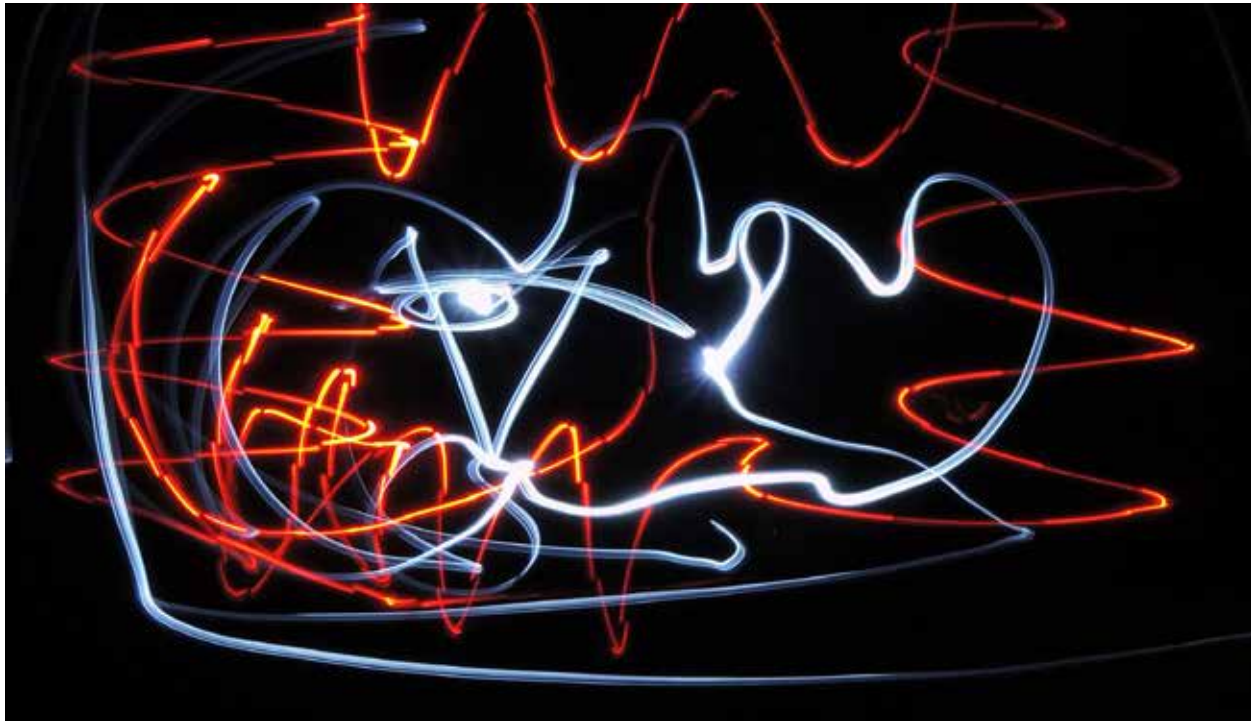
For various reasons (economy, climate crisis) several students from abroad have chosen in recent years to move to Stockholm, which has increased NPP presence and **studio use** at Brinellvägen 58. For peer to peer learning this is very positive. It has also been positive for increasing the flow of learning between BA and MA levels at the Dance Department because

there are more students meeting spontaneously and more self-organized presentations, mini festivals, etc. The NPP students tend to work individually, rather than in groups when they are not in seminars – depending on the size of the group, this can cause a **space shortage** at Brinellvägen 58.

For their Degree Course presentations NPPs have been encouraged to find venues outside of the SKH facilities, with the idea that this will expand boundaries and situate their artistic work in other communities, inviting different kinds of attention and mingling. Some NPP students have challenged this assumption by inviting people from other communities into Brinellvägen 58 to see their Degree Course presentations. In relation to the facilities at Brinellvägen, this has given rise to concerns about **security and scheduling**.

Recommendations - Areas for development: If possible, create an SKH support network for international students who need appropriate housing in Stockholm and include **post-studio practices** as an aspect of the curriculum. To invite performing and choreographic artists as teachers who work entirely outside of studios in order to understand what methods of composition and physicality this type of practice develops. To invite practitioners from various artistic fields who consider the alternate economies post-studio practices create for performing and choreographic artists and the relations to privacy, domestic- space, online platforms, social media and reproducibility they encounter.

Lack of **technical support** for online communication and documentation is the most consistently frustrating aspect of the NPP education, for the program director, course leaders, teachers and students. Not all students have equal access to online materials. When working with long distance learning there is a risk of discrimination against persons without economic advantages, or with limited access to the campus facilities, because of the dependence on internet access. The department has an ongoing



dialogue with the technical department to try to ensure a more consistently available technical help and our recommendation is that this must be prioritized. Maybe also to investigate how other Universities handle distance learning platforms in relation to students who do not have access to advanced technical equipment, free WIFI and cannot pay for unlimited data.

Broadened recruitment and wider participation

Strengths:

The program has a clear intention and awareness considering the needs for wider recruitment and already has a focus on anti-racism/-discrimination and activism as areas for development (elaborated in paragraph on gender equality).

Recommendations - Areas for development:

It seems important for the program to build diverse methods of teaching, about diverse disciplines and to have diverse teachers, scholars and artists recurrently visiting the program and spending time with students. NPP program facilitates seminars, studio visits, workshops

and laboratories for peer collaboration led by experts and artist practitioners, which is a clear strength. When we look at the program's group of students, it's difficult to perceive diversity in terms of student gender, and their artistic fields. By attempting to find the reasons behind such "homogeneous" group a question is proposed: Is the course curriculum not interesting enough for foreign students? Or male students? Or students from other backgrounds other than dance? Diversity is therefore an ongoing theme.

A student points out that diversity can also be diversity within the same artistic background, e.g. that dancers can have many different practices and engage differently and in that way, represent diversity within the field:

I feel in terms of diversity being an aesthetic versus a real thing, that is something that made a difference when I was a student. Because in my class there was more diversity than I felt there was because some people didn't really engage, but then once when engagement happened then you get to different layers of diversity, and also you get to see one person become more people (alumni, video interview).

Another student points out that diversity is not

present, as everyone is “white” and resourceful both financially and socially:

Everybody in the room is a white person with a good background or maybe I’m the poorest (laughter) in the classroom or with a little lack of financially or social support, but that is also because of my location or because of my history (student, video-interview).

In terms of different nationalities Chrysa Parkinson notes that NPP, like all Bologna educations, is very expensive for non-eu participants and that SKH lacks scholarship information and funding.

In sum there seems to be a potential in working with diversity as a value and ambition which entails not only the traditional aspects of race, gender and age, but also reflects their co-dependence on diversity in professional and artistic backgrounds among staff members.

Collaborations and working life

Strengths:

One of the considerable strengths of NPP program is the commitment to “develop artistic practice over a product”. The program leaders consider artistic practice as the center for skill building, experimentation and knowledge production. Their idea of practice was distanced from a mere illustration of theory to become an ongoing, recurring, creative system that produces knowledge and articulate theory. To attain that goal NPP provides an individualized learning platform that is meant to be complemented by collaborative artistic processes. Those collaborations are aimed to take place within SKH but as well outside the University. NPP have facilitated lecture/seminar series specifically on “collaboration in artistic processes” and tried to create collaborations with doctoral students and other Master programs through structures for joint methods courses e.g. the course *Reflection Documentation and Presentation*, shared with PHD students, with the focus on practical aspects of documentati-

on. Although they were fruitful courses, they didn’t result in long term collaborations.

Another strength is NPP attempt to expand the notions of movement, dance and choreography to be able to research exploring bodies in motion, including human emancipation, social dimensions and relations, power dynamics, conflicts etc – characteristics we can observe in our societies and their social, cultural and political dynamics. NPP leaders are not interested in working as student producers, either in influencing students to invest their energy on the art market. Nevertheless, is important that the program tries to facilitate bridges with the outside world. In 2017/18 NPP program offered a travel program made of an optional first travel and a second mandatory travel. Students could choose where they wanted to travel, in Sweden or abroad, and to which kind of organization – festival, artist in residence, institution, etc. The travel program’s intention was to increase the knowledge on various ways of organizing spaces/contexts for dance and choreography, as well as to increase the relations made between artist/student and places/contexts within the dance and choreography field. The program had many positive comments from the students. The NPP program set as well a collaboration with Marabouparken (exhibition place for visual art) to take place in the spring of 2020, but it was postpone due to the situation with the Corona-pandemic. These two projects show an interest by NPP team to set bridges between students and the outside world, as well as their objectives of exploring bodies in motion, within social, cultural and political dynamics. These bridges are necessary specially if the program considers that more and more students apply from abroad - it would be important that these students can be at the same vantage point as Swedish students in terms of where, in the city, they can interact, collaborate and feed their practices. As well is important to meet its aims of expanding the notions of movement, dance and choreography to be able to research exploring bodies in motion, including human emancipation, social dimensions and relations, power dynamics,

conflicts etc – all characteristics that belong to the world at large, outside the comfort zone of the university.

Master programs become a nest and a shelter for students and professional practitioners. For foreign students the university campus becomes “the one” familiar place in the new city, where they feel the most confident and safe. But the University can as well become a bubble in which the economy of ideas orbit only within the university premises, which doesn't help students to build relations with other versions of the same ideas that might orbit outside, within different individuals and groups. The fact that students can choose a supervisor from other country or university might help in this regard. Nevertheless if we look at the outside world beyond the monetary, product driven art market we can find cultural centers, art organizations, Ngo's, artist running initiatives, etc - the engines of different markets of ideas, about different aspects, issue and virtues of our societies, and using different art disciplines to tackle them.

Recommendations - Areas for development:

Documentation could be one of the focus points for long term collaborative practices between all SKH master courses, since its practice is inherent by all courses, but it seems that it has been used less as a practice-based course and more as a theoretical, discursive ground. Student presentations of documented artistic projects, plans for documentation and their methods and theories of documentation in performative and mediated practices, have been helpful to discuss methods they are using, or they might use in the future. But as important would be to articulate theory and knowledge about their individual works through a documentation collaborative practice:

For the last 10 years I have been working professionally in the field of performance. I believe that one of the performance strengths is in its ephemerality, in its constant disappearance, its plays with memory, sequence and time. Therefore, documentation becomes a cornerstone in

my own work – beyond its capacity to freeze aspects of my work to be presented post-performance. Collaborating with professionals from the fields of film, fine arts, dance, neuroscience, social psychology, etc have influenced myself in perceiving documentation as a creative act – one where I can “find the work that is not visible through a live presentation. Delving into documentation have led my practice to develop works in drawing, film, photography and writing from performance-based research. All those objects I produce they have performativity as a departing point. They are not documentations of performances but objects in their own rights, that nevertheless inform and give feedback to my performance work and research. (Member of the assessment panel, November 2020)

Documentation as a collaboration practice would allow student work's to develop, not only regarding ways of fixing and representing the post-work to a wider audience, but as well a tool to find how their work can “work” beyond what they already know. A film maker and a dancer can influence each other considerably just by trying to document an event together. Sharing their skills and practices allow them to experiment and build skills they didn't had before, in long term collaborations, apart of the fix and conclusive results documentation can collect.

Students articulate theories and produce knowledge out of their practices. These forms of knowledge emerge as raw materials that need to be shaped. Teachers, peer students and supervisors are a great deal of help, since they are all in the same boat, but it doesn't necessarily mean that they nourish the same ideas and use them actively in their own practices. Collaborating with the world outside the university permits students to find individuals and groups that share the same ideas, methodologies and obsessions and have similar and distinct questions towards them. Which means that students can benefit from those collaborations for their practice and research. The fact that they discuss outside the university and bring those discussions inside the “classroom” is beneficial



for all students and the University programs. Since diversity is a key factor on the course, since foreign students wouldn't understand where to begin their collaboration outside the school, and since previous students reported a lack of bridges with the outside world, it would be important to find the time and the resources to connect students with organizations outside the University. This task could be divided by the teachers that are already inside the course. Nevertheless, a suggestion could be to find an extra teacher, to save the actual teachers energy (according to the interviews we did to NPP teachers, time seems to be lacking on their sides to invest in such work). This extra teacher would be from Stockholm (which goes align with the school idea of having permanent teachers on

board), and would know most of visual arts, dance, choreography, film etc. scenes, dynamics and discourses. Having an extra teacher (if an employment is not possible, it could be prioritized in another way by change in structures or areas of responsibility within the permanent staff) would provide local bridges with other fields of art, other than dance, which at this point the school is lacking. He/she would be responsible for studying the work, practice and research of each student - before they entered NPP studies as well as their new ideas on what they want to research during the program. The extra teacher/responsible would therefore suggest the students monthly events in the city, that they could attend and participate. Students would have monthly collective meetings in which

they would share and give each other feedback on the ideas they decided to hold for their works. By dedicating his/her time only for the aspect of research and collaboration, this extra teacher could take work from the back of other teachers and give opportunity for foreign and local students to equally benefit from what the city can offer.

Gender equality

Strengths:

There are women and men teaching at the NPP programme. SKH uses an intersectional perspective, where other categories than gender also are of importance. Therefore SKH mainly uses the concept equality, which refers to equal value and rights for all people. In addition to gender, equality also includes all the other discrimination grounds in the Discrimination Act (age, disability, ethnicity, religion or other belief, sexual orientation, transgender identity or expression).

There have been anti-racism seminars held at the Dance Department in 2019-2020, good for students who are not familiar with anti-racism discourses but for those who are more familiar, and particularly for students who are persons of color, there has occasionally been some difficulty situating the intimacy and complexity of their personal experiences with racism in the predominately homogenous, white context of the Dance Department.

There has been a request for **safe space** for persons of color at SKH, especially students. NPP staff is working now to communicate this need to the Student Union, in consultation with the lecturers of the seminar on Anti-Racism 2019-20 at the Dance Department.

Recommendations - Areas for development:

In the group of students there are much more women than men over the years. We cannot see how **gender equality** is taken into consideration in the programme content and in the selection of learning material for the programme and this is a development area that we recommend.

To generate interest to a diverse group, in any fields of study, the curriculum itself must be challenged in order to be appealing. Meaning that perhaps some of NPP's study pillars should be based on global south performance, dance and choreography theories. Perhaps it's not enough to bring professionals that can talk about colonialism and decolonization movements. Perhaps it's as important to set a curriculum that embrace and highlights performance, dance and choreography as global phenomena and bases some of its departing points and guidelines in non-western forms of thinking. Because if we say we want to decolonize Swedish dance, we might be misusing the word decolonize, as the root of the word comes from very specific phenomena. Nevertheless, if there is something to decolonize is indeed the idea that dance, performance and choreography might be Swedish or western born.

Diversity will, for instance, be invited if students and artists feel that the course offers a diverse lexicon on performance, dance and choreography, that is beyond local, beyond western - that they can use as a continuation of their works and research.

What does it mean to have discussion about colonialism and decolonial movements if the majority of students are European, or have European background? What does it mean to discuss gender issues if all the students are female? Diversity in terms of geographies from which students are coming from can help to understand better colonialism and decolonial struggles, from different perspectives e.g. from the ones that had a direct contact with colonial power structures and the ones who had indirect contact with it. Diversity means diverse points of view, frictions, and a deeper understanding of phenomenon. Therefore, this change in the curriculum could include theories of performance from different continents. Global south writers such as Esiaba Irobi (Nigeria), Abiola Ireola (Nigeria), Leda Martins (Brazil), Augusto Boal (Brazil), Achille Mbembe (Cameroon) etc. - that made a considerable research about Performance studies and how Western academy remains the unique source of validation on the historical and contemporary

definitions of what constitute the phenomenon of Performance, could be a start. It would make the curriculum a “safe place” for artists coming from other regions of the world.

Student influence

Strengths:

The students at NPP are a relatively small group and the dialogue between the students and the program director is continuously present. Beside the course evaluations that are carried out at the end of each course there are several other activities to engage and follow-up with the students. The program director has a standing offer for the students to ask for individual meetings. This has been greatly appreciated by the students as something very positive. There are Monday Feedbacks which were initially introduced to create a fora where the students meet and can see and discuss each other's work – they could choose to join or not in these **Monday Feedbacks**, and if sharing something to get feedback, they also choose the method for how to receive feedback.

Since fall 2017, a few different ways of course evaluation have been tried out; verbally and written, scheduled and non-scheduled. Based on the turnout and what has come out of the evaluations making room in the schedule, where they meet and do this individually but at the same time, gives the most participation from the students. Additionally, the oral evaluations have not worked so well as evaluations, since there have not been enough students present, but the few who have been there have had a lot of comments, which have been a little too much to process for one person present, even if they are, as has been the case for many of these, a staff member familiar with the course and students.

Recommendations - Areas for development:

The self-evaluation report stress that there is a structure in place to secure the students' influence in the formal procedures within SKH, but many NPP are non-Swedish speaking as

well as not being required to work full-time on campus. These are factors that make it less likely for the NPP students to take an active role as student representatives outside of the department. This is an area of development, to continue to encourage NPP students to join Studoch (students' union) and evaluate what could facilitate this. The self-evaluation report stress that there is a structure in place to secure the students' influence in the formal procedures within SKH, but many NPP are non-Swedish speaking as well as not being required to work full-time on campus. These are factors that make it less likely for the NPP students to take an active role as student representatives outside of the department. This is an area of development, to continue to encourage NPP students to join Studoch (students' union) and evaluate what could facilitate this. A development area is also to look upon why there is not enough students presents in the oral evaluations. And who are the few that have been there with a lot of comments? Additionally two members of the staff needs to be present so that one could take notes, and the other person could talk with the students, to present structured questions and follow up questions.

Another strength that can be depend is that since the Covid-19 health crisis the program director has been having short weekly meetings with NPP students online and making a recording available online when someone is unable to attend. This has been very useful and will be continued. The frequency will be reassessed. The program director and close colleagues will alternate in taking the role of leading this meeting. These meetings are not formal evaluations, but function to bring up issues, interests and concerns and make it easier to address them 'in the moment.' The advantage of being a small program lies among other things with the "short distance" between students and management.

At NPP, this is expressed, for example, at the weekly Monday meetings, where students are invited to open dialogue and feedback with Chrysa Parkinson. The review group notes,

however, that none of the 3 interviewed students have made use of this opportunity or really heard of it. Therefore, there may be a need to re-clarify the purpose and structure of the Monday meeting, for it to become a forum which may be in fact accessible to students' viewpoints and thus serve its intended purpose.¹

Perspectives

During the review process, we have become aware of a few issues/perspectives which are addressed to SKH to a greater extent than to the NPP program.

In regard to economy and budget it is important for the NPP program to have both access to good technical support and to studio-spaces. The fifth NPP program is still working with the same budget as the first year and as mentioned in the inquiry "preconditions", the teachers express that there are limits and that less students would be great. Right now, they have 14-15 students at the program compared to 8 students. This is a premise that SKH should look into as it has an impact on how identity is represented, and will continue to be, challenging.

Or as the program leader express the challenges:

This is what we have, and how to maximize it is a dancer skill (and the background of many people who work with NPP is freelance). With the spirit that you work with what's there and try not to think about money, this might be a risk. After writing the self-evaluation, I should ask for more money.

(Chrysa Parkinson, video-interview August 19).

In regard to the collaboration and coordination between the master's programs, it seems necessary that SKH takes responsibility for the overall planning of the academic year. There are some structural issues that have consequences for NPP students (and probably for other MA students to) in terms of application process, study start and, for example, the selection of elective courses for NPP students.

The assessment panel recommend that SKH more actively supports the collaboration between the MA programs by first and foremost becoming aware of the more structural contexts that makes it difficult to collaborate, create networks and utilize resources across the programs. It is our point that NPP (and the other MA's) needs help to find solutions for problems related to these issues.

SKH is recognized for their various policies regarding gender equality, student influence, wieder recruitment etc. It is a convincing work and inspiring for other (higher) educations. In this sense, the panel stress the importance of SKH continuing to be aware of the policies/values and that concepts such as diversity are continuously discussed, followed up and implemented.

¹ according to Chryssa Parkinson in her comments to the assessment group monday meetings are now changed into bi-monthly meetings.

