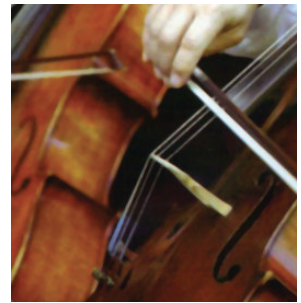


# chapter 01

## the brief

fig. 1.1 : Elements synonymous with the Department of Music and the process of music - preparation and performance.





The Department of Music was founded in 1923 by Prof. J.P. Malan. From the start problems with financial support and accommodation occurred that prohibited the expansion and growth of the Department which eventually led to the closing down of the school. In 1960 the necessity for the reinstatement of the music school arose. In the words of the former rector of the University, Prof. C.H. Rautenbach, at the establishment of a new Music Department: "we as South Africans want a place in the cosmic concert of civilized nations." Once again due to a lack of proper accommodation the operation of the Department was delayed for a year but eventually commenced in 1961. Today the Department of Music forms a thriving part of the University's Faculty of Humanities (Spies & Heydenrych, 1987:215).

The faculty's vision emphasizes its passion for the arts and the human sciences and the contribution these make to society. It is of utmost importance for the Faculty of Humanities, as well as for the Department of Music, to equip their students with the necessary skills and knowledge that will enable them to excel in their professional careers. Besides the local relevance encouraged in the education programs, the mission is also to ensure high-level students that are internationally competitive (<http://www.up.ac.za/deps/humanities/music.html> : 2008).

The Department of Music provides a comprehensive curriculum, uniting fields of study that, in Europe, would normally be divided between University and Conservatory. Areas such as practical music, music education, musicology and music technology are all included in the scope of the Department. Tuition in all the instruments of Western art music is offered, together with an increasing emphasis on the study and performance of indigenous African music, jazz and popular styles. The Department also offers a music therapy program, the only one of its kind on the continent. This program can

be completed at master's level and is professionally validated by the Health Professions Council of South Africa. Two undergraduate degree courses, BMus and BA (Music), are presented by the Department. Postgraduate courses in various fields of music can also be obtained from honours to doctorate level.

With a dedicated staff of approximately 20 full-time and 35 part-time music professionals and a student base of almost 270 students, the Department maintains a high standard of excellence. Enrolment figures from the past four years indicate a growing Department and emphasize the need to expand and improve current facilities.

The Department also continues a prominent public influence in the forms of the UP Symphony Orchestra, the UP Chorale and the Tuks Camerata. The orchestra, a 44-year old institution, is today the only large-scale orchestra in Pretoria that performs the symphonic repertoire on a regular basis. Besides this achievement, the orchestra also provides a platform for the Department's finest soloists in gaining experience of symphonic ensemble playing, engagement with some of the world's finest music, teamwork and discipline (<http://www.up.ac.za/deps/humanities/music.html> : 2008).

Despite the endless achievements of the Department, its potential is suppressed by the lack of adequate facilities for teaching, practising and performing music. Currently the facilities accommodating the various directions in the music curriculum are scattered across Campus, creating a segregated Department without a sense of cohesion and a stimulating cultural hub where students, lecturers and expertise can spontaneously interact and encourage creativity. Various venues on Main Campus are currently being utilised by the Department:

#### The Musaion and Music Building

General administration facilities, the library, practise studios and recital rooms are situated in the Music Building. The Musaion houses a recital hall, an organ and poorly revamped studios and equipment for the course in Music Technology.

#### Building 5 & 6 on South Campus

These facilities are utilised for lecture rooms for Music Education and Theory, orchestral organisation and a drum room for African Music.

#### The Old Club Hall

The UP Chorale mainly uses the hall for choir practises. Their administration offices are also accommodated here.

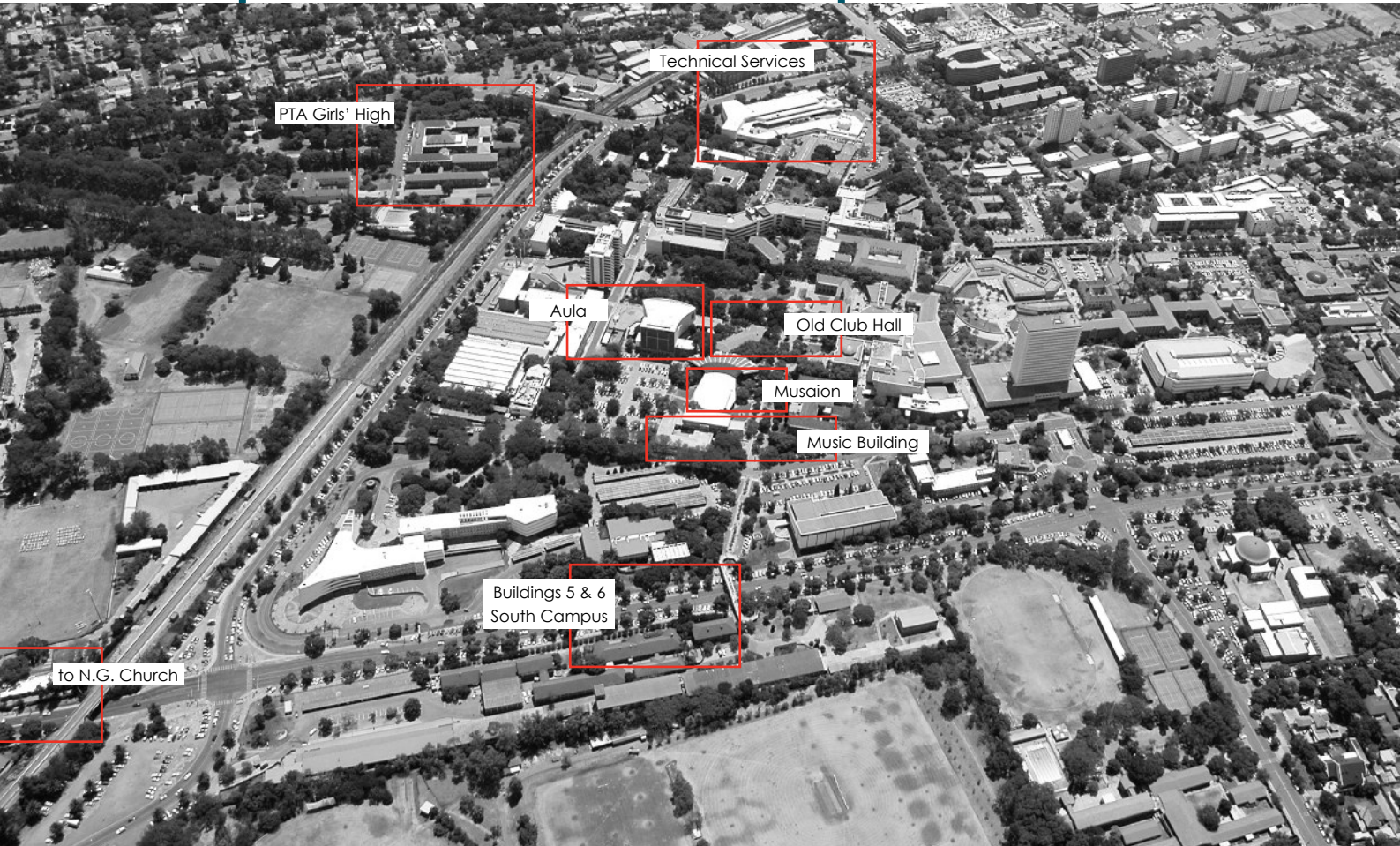
#### Technical Services Building

Offices and laboratories for the Music Therapy course are located in the building.

#### The Aula

This state of the art auditorium is available for large-scale public performances, but, like the Musaion, it is the general property of the University and under the management of the Department of Facilities and Services. Thus, both these venues have to be booked well in advance for use by the Department of Music. Instances when the venues are unobtainable, the Department has to make arrangements with schools, churches or community organisations in the area for the use of halls or organs for practises and recitals.

The intentions of both the University and the Music Department indicate a concern regarding the employment of their amenities by the primary users: the students and faculty. When analysing these two groups as clients it emphasizes the need to create stimulating, safe, accessible and vibrant environments where the dynamics of contemporary knowledge can be taught, experienced, practised and applied to society.





Two interviews, one with Dan Potgieter (Campus Planner – University of Pretoria) and the other with Prof. John Hinch (HoD – Department of Music, University of Pretoria), emphasized the problems experienced by the Music Department. An official problem statement, compiled by the University of Pretoria, Department of Library Services in February 2008 also gives a detailed account of their needs:

### 1. Access, Security & Integration

The general insufficient supply of parking on Campus is a predicament for the Department. Part-time lecturers struggle to find parking in the vicinity of their lecturing venues which makes transportation of equipment difficult. During performances in the Aula, open to attendance by the general public, visitors struggle for almost 45 – 60 minutes afterwards to vacate the Campus premises due to the security barrier at the main entrance and the poor infrastructure provided by the Ring Road on Campus. Pedestrian access to and from the Aula and the Musaion are not ideal for disabled visitors and these routes can often not accommodate the crowds in attendance.

### 2. Standards of Existing Facilities

The current facilities utilised by the Department are certainly not in comparison to international standards or even that of the University's South African counterparts like the Stellenbosch University or the University of Cape Town. The Department strives to utilise the expertise of foreign artists and academics, but often seminars and courses involving these guests have to be accommodated in alternative, private venues at unnecessary costs. The facilities in use on a day-to-day basis also seem obsolete. Practise rooms have little or no air-conditioning, poor lighting, inadequate acoustic properties and the interiors are mostly deteriorated, causing the facilities to be uninspirational spaces. The various venues also prevent proper interaction between students and lecturers.

### 3. New Facilities Required

The primary problem for the Department is the lack of their own auditorium and a sufficient library. Currently the Department is sharing the Musaion with the rest of Campus. The Musaion and the Aula is the property of the University and is being used almost daily for University functions. The Department of Music therefore has to plan their year well in advance to be able to make use of the Musaion for their practical training and performances. Any additional functions or recitals throughout the year can hardly ever be accommodated in the Musaion on shorter notice, which leaves the Department struggling to find adequate venues for their course requirements. Although the Musaion has recently been fitted with the studios and equipment required for the course Music Technology, it is still subject to extensive planning for students to do their required practical work in the field of Music Technology. Another problem is that the general usage of the Musaion prevents the Department from having ideally fitted, secure recital space where equipment is readily available and safe from damage or theft.

The music library on the second floor of the Music Building is simply too small to accommodate all the students and the amount of material the Department has in its possession. Estimation is that the library will need to be enlarged by three times its current size in order for it to accommodate the needs of the Department. Proper sound booths, more shelving and storage space and seminar rooms are some of the immediate requirements.

In general, the Department requires the upgrading of existing facilities and the establishment of new facilities that will align them with their counterparts, as well as provide an image that will portray the Department's contemporary dynamics.



fig. 1.2 : An aerial photograph of part of Hatfield Campus and the surrounding urban fabric. Current venues in service of the Department of Music are indicated to illustrate the segregation of the Department and its facilities.

## 1.3.

## main research questions

## 1.4.

## assumptions

## 1.5.

## delimitations

The following research questions aim to provide the necessary direction for the project in order to establish appropriate design parameters.

1. Where within the assumed boundaries of the music precinct should the new music school be introduced to best serve as a contextual, functional and social extension of the existing?
2. What links and relationships need to be established between the new and existing music schools in order to maintain a distinct character for each while simultaneously creating a combined facility functioning as one?
3. What elements, spaces or functions can be incorporated into the design to attract a diversity of users and audiences that will assist in revitalising the music precinct?
4. What will be an appropriate shared language between the new and existing facilities that relate to each other yet indicate a contemporary conversion of a former architectural era?

The following assumptions were made prior to the commencement of the design process in order to set some guidelines as to how the transformation of the music school and precinct can be implemented.

1. University Road access to Campus will move from the existing position at the Department of Engineering to the new location at the end of Senaats Road.
2. The four storey parking arcade proposed for the parking area at the back of the Aula will not realise. Instead, an underground parking garage across the Ring Road from the Music Building, with access from the new University Road entrance into Senaats Road and from the Ring Road at the crossing with Tukkies Avenue, will rather be constructed. At ground level plans will go ahead to establish a new student green space.
3. The Aula and Musaeon will continue to be upgraded and improved to remain state of the art auditoria, attracting a variety of performing arts and their audiences.

The following delimitations are determined by the scope of the project. The delimitations indicate the areas of the project that will be focused on in the detailed design process and the areas that will merely develop according to prescribed guidelines.

1. The focus of the project will fall on the design of the new facility for the Department of Music and not on revamping the existing ones. The new facility will be designed in accordance with contemporary requirements and fitment of acoustic spaces. These layouts, materials and systems will serve as precedent for the upgrading of the existing music facilities.
2. Opportunities for future expansion of the music precinct will be suggested in an urban framework; however, details and designs of these extensions will not be included in the design resolution of the new music school.



## the proposed intervention

In order to establish a distinct place for music on Campus where this performing art can be fully practised, enjoyed, experienced, performed and exposed, a strategy of extending and converting the existing environment has been devised.

Contextually the new music school will be located on the parking area to the west of the Music Building as a direct extension of the existing facility. Furthermore will the building define the south edge of the precinct and create a communal functional and social space in the centre of the precinct in service of the music facilities on its north, south and east edges. This will give new significance to the current underutilised south-west corner of the precinct which use to be alive and bustling with energy in previous decades when it was home to the recreational hub of the University – the sports fields. The monumental, organic design of the two new lecture theatres/auditoria on the west end of the building will create an iconic corner in celebration of the performing art of music at the new University Road entrance to the campus.

Two axes will form the main circulation spines through the new building, extending into the context beyond and linking the music school and precinct with the rest of Campus in a legible manner. These routes aim to draw energy from the main energy sources surrounding the precinct: Tukkies Avenue on the east side, the new student green and the public access point on the south and the restaurants on the north-east corner of the precinct.

The north-south axis will be mainly public orientated – a performance route along which chance performance venues, information stops, entrance points and spill-out spaces for the formal performance venues will be situated. The east-west axis will be orientated towards the direct users of the music school. This preparation spine will link the new and existing music schools and facilities pertinent to the preparation of music will branch off this spine.

On a social level the current situation will be converted from an isolated, internal orientated and enclosed milieu to an open community of diverse users. Flexible, multi-purpose spaces, transitions and interactive edges will provide users with choice and various communication options. By extending the program of the music school beyond the requirements of the brief with the integration of restaurants, foyers and exhibition spaces, it is inevitable that an increased variety of people will utilise the precinct and thus provide the Music Department with better exposure.

The extension and conversion of the music school will probably be the most obvious from a functional perspective. The once segregated Department – with venues scattered across Campus and the surrounding public realm - will now be concentrated in one facility that adheres to the spatial and functional requirements of the school. The program of the new building will include multi-media and research centre, service areas, a practise studio block, two lecture theatres with acoustic properties suitable for chamber and individual performances and a variety of social spaces at ground level. The existing music building will be converted into an administration facility, with exhibition spaces and a re-vamped foyer area to the Musaion auditorium. The social spaces at ground level will form a continuous network with those of the new building.