

## **Movement as Sound Generator**

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### *Theoretical approach*

The fact that movement is the prerequisite for sound forms an indissoluble link between the two elements, whether in nature (wind moves leaves, in handicrafts: sawing, sanding, pounding) or in the practice of music. In instrumental playing, maximum control is usually sought by means of the playing movements in order to shape the musical parameters and thus the form of the work to be interpreted. Unwanted sounds or noises are eliminated as much as possible.

In experimental improvisation, the instruments are expanded to include objects and (everyday) materials. Similar to the premise that every consciously designed movement can be perceived as dance, sounds of any kind can be used. Matthias Schwabe mentions sound research as one theme of artistic exploration in improvisation.<sup>1</sup> He suggests an explorative approach, 'which consists of entering into a kind of "dialogue" with the instrument (or the material) [...] [and] questioning it: Who are you? What can you do? How do you sound?' Schwabe refers to such an exploratory attitude not only in terms of exploratory processes, but also in terms of the willingness to be inspired by the sound materials during improvisations (as "instant composition") and to create or to let happen spontaneously new sound encounters.

### *Practical approach*

The composer Matthias Spahlinger has developed a series of improvisation concepts that prescribe precise rules of play and at the same time are open-ended and process-oriented.<sup>2</sup> In the example 'eigenzeit' chosen here, a minimal movement such as the opening of the hand can produce a long-lasting sound, such as when a ping-pong ball is released from some height. The playing instruction is:

Find an object that cannot be influenced in tempo, rhythm and duration after the start. Find out which movement produces which sound. Choose a movement that sets the object in motion, which you then no longer control/can no longer control.

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<sup>1</sup> Matthias Schwabe, *Exploring Improvisation – Exploring Music* in: Reinhard Gagel, Matthias Schwabe (ed.), *Improvisation erforschen – improvisierend forschen · Researching Improvisation – Researching by Improvisation*. Bielefeld: transcript, 2016 (p. 364)

<sup>2</sup> Mathias Spahlinger, *vorschläge. konzepte zur ver(über)flüssigung der funktion des komponisten*. Universal Edition, 1993

Each of you decides about the start of the action. Let it happen the most favorable moment.

You can't repeat the action!

Create interesting connections, moments of silence and of strong dynamics.

Try once with closed eyes. Your inner attitude: deliberate unintentional.

Find a partner. Only one of each pair shows her /his sound to the partner. The partner will find an according movement.

Round 1: Half group with objects does another round with their sounds. The others are listening. Then the movers will reproduce the course in the same order of actions.

Round 2: The movers may use their movement several times and they may vary their movement in terms of duration. The sounders may use their sound only once, but not necessarily when the movement of their partner occurs.



