

## **A Selection of Statements about Rhythm**

The rhythms of the pulse, of breathing, of heart movement, the rhythms of walking, of work, of food intake, of waking and sleeping states, of sexual life, the pendulum rhythms of physical oscillations and wave movements, the rhythms of the course of the stars, of human life, of world-historical processes all take place according to the same polarity principle.

Barthel, 1928

Whereas the concept of time covers all types of succession and duration, rhythm usually implies a particular kind of succession of events, one where the events occur with some repetitive structure.

Peter Desain/Luke Windsor, 2000

Life expresses itself and appears rhythmically. With a given time structure, on the other hand, the intellect forces the rhythmic pulse of life under its own law.

Ludwig Klages, 1934

Rhythm is periodicity awareness. A periodic primal movement is the raising and lowering of the body, the wrestling of the human body with the earth's gravity.

after Rudolf Bode, 1926

Rhythm has something to do with order, more precisely, with a binary order, such as the alternation between heavy and light in analogy to the lifting and lowering of the foot, arsis and thesis, to the heartbeat or breathing.

Clemens Risi, 2004

Rhythm can be thought of as the division of such a temporal flow into discrete and regular events.

Peter Desain/Luke Windsor, 2000

He stands between two milieus, or between two in-between milieus, like between two waters, between two hours, between dog and wolf [...]. Changing environments, caught on the spot, is the rhythm.

Gilles Deleuze, 1980

The concept of rhythm implies not only regularity, but also disturbance, rupture, pause, difference and discontinuity, in the interplay of mutual reference.

Gronau/Ghattas/Schouten, 2007

The meter is an intellectual principle. It regulates the sequence and the connection of the elements of life in a mechanical way; whereas in rhythm life is expressed in its very own form and fullness. The meter is calculated intellectually, the rhythm is grasped intuitively. It is important that the metric regulation of the continuous movements that make up rhythm does not threaten their own nature and character.

Émile Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921

Rhythm does not consist of pure repetition and restoration of the same, but of infinite variation, differentiation, disturbance of equilibrium, a constant "crisis". In other words, rhythm cannot be thought without "arythmia".

Jean-Claude Schmitt, 2014

(*Geschichte der Rhythmen* in: *Rhythmus – Balance – Metrum*, S. 24)

Everything has a beginning, but the rhythm has two. The second event in a rhythmic sequence of events is not the end of the first event, but the setting of a newly occurring second initial event. The rhythmic perception of time is determined by the fact that it is more strongly determined by its beginning than by its end.

Julian Caskel, 2020

(*Die Theorie des Rhythmus*, S. 7)

<b>Maximum arranged</b> <i>Maximal geordnet</i>	<b>Minimal arranged</b> <i>Minimal geordnet</i>
<b>Digital</b> Vertical points in time <i>Vertikale Zeitpunkte</i>	<b>Analog</b> Horizontal linearity, continuity <i>Horizontale Linearität, Kontinuität</i>
<b>Binary</b> Strong limitation of the number of events <i>Starke Begrenzung der Anzahl von Ereignissen</i>	<b>Plural</b> Weak limitation of the number of events <i>Schwache Begrenzung der Anzahl von Ereignissen</i>
<b>Symmetrical</b> Equal distribution of events <i>Gleiche Verteilung von Ereignissen</i>	<b>Stochastic</b> Unequal distribution of events <i>Ungleiche Verteilung von Ereignissen</i>

Table from: Christoph Caskel, *Die Theorie des Rhythmus*, 2020 (p. 153ff.)

**‘To be perceived as rhythm, properties from both columns must be combined.’**  
(ibid, p. 153)

4 Examples:

1.		2.	
Digital	Analog <b>X</b>	Digital <b>X</b>	Analog
Binary <b>X</b>	Plural	Binary	Plural <b>X</b>
Symmetrical <b>X</b>	Stochastic	Symmetrical	Stochastic <b>X</b>

3.		4.	
Digital <b>X</b>	Analog	Digital <b>X</b>	Analog
Binary <b>X</b>	Plural	Binary	Plural <b>X</b>
Symmetrical	Stochastic <b>X</b>	Symmetrical <b>X</b>	Stochastic

1. Meredith Monk, *Little Breath* (2008)
2. Karl-Heinz Stockhausen, *Elektronische Studie II* (1954)
3. Sequence of strong accents in Igor Stravinsky, *Sacre du Printemps* (1913), *Augures printanier*
4. Henry Cowell, *Quartet for 2 flutes, violin and viola* (1915-1917), 1<sup>st</sup> movement



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