

# Listening Movement

## – Music transformed into Movement and Movement transformed into Music

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Emile Jaques-Dalcroze, (1865-1950) composer and music pedagogue, has reflected over the relationship between music and movement and means that the greatness of the music can be translated into movement in a way that favours the natural expression of the body. The mind and corporeality of the movement and music become a way to listen and express music.

To deepen and increase the understanding of this embodied listening we will introduce the philosophical discussion of the sense of hearing that have emerged in recent decades and has intensified over the past ten years. It was mainly related to the phenomenology, either within this tradition (Espinete, 2009; Ihde, 2007) or in a critical settlement with the same (Nancy, 2002). The common denominator is still that the starting point is, that the listening has played an inconspicuous position in philosophy, where the vision quickly became established as the central sense of what has come to be called “ocular centrism” (Levin, 1989). If the vision traditionally accounts for an objectifying, distancing, and classifying relation to the world, hearing/listening is focused on processes, closeness, and openness (Espinete, 2009). Deep listening explores the difference between hearing and listening. Though we receive sound waves through the ears these waves are transduced to electrical impulses by the mechanisms of the ear and transmitted to the brain where listening takes place (Oliveros, 2002). Hearing is a sense, listening is a skill, and there are two complementary systems: sensory and cognitive processes. Sound places us in space and time. In space we can experience the reverberation of the surface, and the micro sounds from bodies in the environment. The listening is the main way that we experience the flow of time from past to future. Sonority is time and meaning. Listening is our access to understanding through paying attention to the quiet, the subtle and the understated. Conscious listening always creates understanding and extraordinary listening appears to be uniquely a human characteristic. It is not only about the direct listening to music, but also about listening as a basic phenomenon in human relations. The listening is phenomenological about openness and acceptance, which is manifested both aesthetically and socially.

Through practices in eurhythmics, plastique and ear training, music is placed in the whole person. Movement/dance is an equal part in this language, music/rhythm, where the movement of the body is used to represent the musical element (Jacques-Dalcroze, 1920). Jacques-Dalcroze claimed also that musical expressiveness could be taught and does not solely depend on natural talent and that prominent musician often had an instinctive physical connection to music. He trained students in each of the musical elements so that they could represent these elements physically. This physical listening resulted in a virtual lexicon of musical translated movements as follows:

## "Music

Pitch  
Intensity of sound  
Timbre  
Time  
Rhythm  
Rests  
Melody  
Counterpoint  
Chords  
Harmonic successions  
Phrasing  
Construction/form  
Orchestration

## Dance

Position and direction of gestures in space  
Muscular dynamic  
Diversity in corporal forms  
Time  
Rhythm  
Pauses  
Continuous succession of isolated movements  
Opposition of movements  
Constellation of associated gestures/movements  
Succession of associated movements  
Phrasing  
Distribution of movements in space and time  
Opposition and combination of diverse corporeal forms"

The training of the body includes movement from breath, gravity, rotation, and exploration of the body's centre in relation to the periphery. The training also helps to develop a perceptive sensibility. Jacques-Dalcroze approach aims, on the one hand, to create a number of automatisms and a solid context in muscle function and, on the other hand, to establish and protect communication between our spirit's two poles, body and mind, and expand our natural rhythms.

## References

David Espinet (2009)

*Phänomenologie des Hörens: Eine Untersuchung im Ausgang von Martin Heidegger*  
(new edition 2016)

**(English summary:** David Espinet deals with the question of the re-establishment of listening within the development of philosophical theory. Contrary to an often visually influenced epistemic tradition which neglects listening, the auditive experience patterns are shown to be crucial for Heidegger's thinking. The experience of listening creates a particular pre-intentional openness which allows the emergence of whatever is to be thought. In its complete structure, the experience of listening ranges from sensual listening to the act of understanding or thinking. Listening and thinking develop in a differential interplay - as thinking that listens, which is open for the unexpected, still silent sense, and as listening that thinks, that in its bodily existence has to listen beyond the comprehensible to the incomprehensible sense as a completely other sense. In the resonating cavity of the body, the claim of openness is thus addressed to thinking, a demand to which it only close itself, but from which it cannot withdraw.

**German description:** David Espinet nimmt die Frage nach der Rehabilitierung des Hörens im Kontext philosophischer Theoriebildung auf. Entgegen einer vielfach visualistisch geprägten, horvergessenen Erkenntnistradition erweist sich für Heideggers Denken das auditive Erfahrungsmuster als ebenso zentral. Im Hören klingt auf besondere Weise jene vorintentionale Offenheit an, die das, was zu denken gibt, zulässt. Hören und Denken prägen sich jeweils im differenzierten Wechselspiel aus - als horendes Denken, das offen ist für unerwarteten, noch stillen Sinn; und als denkendes Hören, das in seiner Leiblichkeit über den verständlichen Sinn hinaus auch Unverständliches, mithin Fremdes oder Anderes, vernimmt. Die Arbeit ist richtungsweisend [...].Helmuth Vetter in Philosophischer Literaturanzeiger 64/1 (2011), S. 35-40)

Don Ihde (2007)

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Émile Jaques-Dalcroze (1920)

*Rhythm, Music & Education*



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