

LE RYTHME

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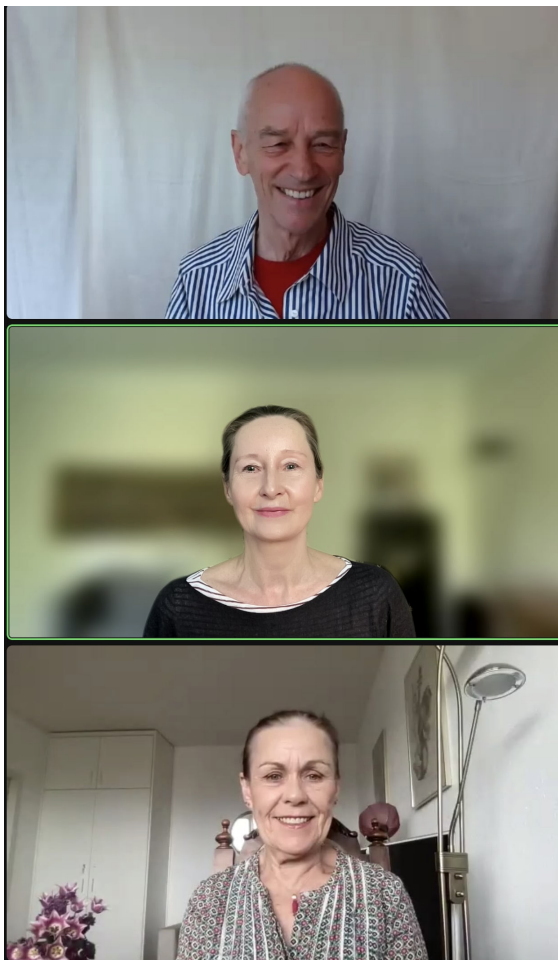
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Dear members of FIER,
dear Reader,

In this, *Crossing Boundaries*, our latest biannual issue of *Le Rythme*, we are excited to share the ideas, methods, and visions of 14 contributors from 9 countries and 3 continents: South Africa, Mexico, the USA, Austria, Switzerland, France, Germany, England, and the Netherlands.

Le Rythme's past journeys have taken us into the scientific aspects of eurhythmics and through its artistic identity. Now, thanks to our authors, we explore how borders and limitations can be crossed and breakthroughs made: how eurhythmics can be incorporated and effectively used in other disciplines; how it can inspire an artist to find mobility and add expressive dimensions to her work, and especially, how inherent to its methodology is the inevitability that boundaries of all kinds will be crossed, willingly or in spite of ourselves.

We hope that this current issue brings you new revelations about the transformative power of our shared field, and that it inspires you to consider participating in our next one—its theme as yet unknown. In the meantime, we are proud to offer you this one.



The editorial team with Mary Brice, Fabian Bautz and Dorothea Weise, who were responsible for the 2019, 2021 and 2023 editions, says goodbye with this issue and wishes inspiring reading.

Lucern · Geneva · Berlin
May 2023

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“What the Music Wants From us”: Learning Youth Orchestra Music Through Eurhythmics

Eva Nivbrant Wedin, Liesl van der Merwe



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Eva Nivbrant Wedin is a professor in Eurhythmics at the Royal College of Music in Stockholm, where she is leading the program for Eurhythmics teacher education. Eva is the project leader for several international projects, such as the Linnaeus-Palme exchange between KMH and NWU, International teaching practice for Music teacher students, and an Erasmus+ strategic partnership between four European Higher Education Institutions with professional Eurhythmics programmes. She has also written several books about Eurhythmics.

Liesl van der Merwe is a professor in the School of Music at the North-West University, South Africa. Some of her research interests include music and well-being, positive psychology and music education, Dalcroze Eurhythmics, spirituality and lived musical experiences. She supervises postgraduate studies and teaches research methodology, music education and bassoon. Liesl has published articles in high-impact journals.

She also performs in chamber music ensembles and is the conductor of the North-West Youth Orchestra.

In a youth orchestra, there are many borders to cross, for example, different competency levels, cultures, languages, socio-economic circumstances, races etc. Another challenge for beginners is learning orchestra music by only following the conductor's instructions and gestures. On numerous occasions, Eva Nivbrant Wedin, from KMH in Stockholm, has worked with the North-West Youth Orchestra in South Africa, helping them learn their repertoire through eurhythmics. Therefore, this basic qualitative study aims to understand what meaning youth orchestra members ascribed to their experiences of learning orchestra music through eurhythmics. We collected data through interviews, which were thematically analysed. Six themes emerged: social interaction, enjoyment, better understanding, empowerment, expression, and improved performance. Therefore, we argue that eurhythmics can be used to cross borders in youth orchestras, thereby creating understanding between members of different languages, ages, and cultures and improving their musical understanding and performance of orchestral works.

Dans un orchestre de jeunes, il y a de nombreuses frontières à franchir, par exemple, différents niveaux de compétence, cultures, langues, circonstances socio-économiques, races, etc. Un autre défi pour les débutants est d'apprendre la musique de l'orchestre en suivant uniquement les instructions et les gestes du chef d'orchestre. Eva Nivbrant Wedin, du KMH de Stockholm, a travaillé à de nombreuses reprises avec le North-West Youth Orchestra en Afrique du Sud, l'aidant à apprendre son répertoire grâce à la rythmique. Par conséquent, cette étude qualitative de base vise à comprendre la signification que les membres de l'orchestre de jeunes attribuent à leurs expériences d'apprentissage de la musique d'orchestre par le biais de la rythmique. Nous avons recueilli des données par le biais d'entretiens, qui ont fait l'objet d'une analyse thématique. Six thèmes ont émergé : interaction sociale, plaisir, meilleure compréhension, autonomisation, expression et amélioration des performances. Par conséquent, nous soutenons que la rythmique peut être utilisée pour franchir les frontières dans les orchestres de jeunes, créant ainsi une compréhension entre des membres de langues, d'âges et de cultures différents et améliorant leur compréhension musicale et leur performance des œuvres orchestrales.

Introduction

Youth orchestras are fertile ground for learning specific music and social skills. However, social skills, such as crossing borders between members from different cultures, competency levels, languages, socio-economic circumstances, races etc., are under-researched (Kartomi, 2018). Furthermore, although we know that eurhythmics is useful in ensemble rehearsals (Wentink & Van der Merwe, 2020), as well as for flautists preparing contemporary music for performance (Ridout & Habron, 2020) and for developing autonomy and creativity in instrumental pedagogy (Daly, 2022), we do not know how members of a youth orchestra experience learning orchestral music through eurhythmics. Greenhead (2016) describes Dynamic Rehearsal, inspired by the principles of Jaques-Dalcroze, as a process of interpreting and improving performance, often resulting in transformative experiences. In a personal email, Greenhead (2022) told us that she has done Dynamic Rehearsal with individuals, small ensembles, brass ensembles, a double string orchestra and large choirs. Mills (1982) wrote an article on eurhythmics for orchestra, but this was within the context of a school orchestra. How one could apply eurhythmics within the context of a youth orchestra, and how orchestra members experience this way of learning still needed to be explored. Therefore, this basic qualitative study aims to understand what meaning youth orchestra members ascribed to their experiences of learning orchestra music through eurhythmics.

Linnaeus-Palme

The Royal College of Music in Stockholm, Sweden (KMH) and the School of Music at the North-West University, South Africa (NWU), have built a fruitful collaboration over the

years. Eva Nivbrant Wedin, from KMH, has been teaching at NWU regularly since 2007, and also started working with the North-West Youth Orchestra in 2011. In 2012 KMH and NWU got funding from the Linnaeus-Palme exchange programme to extend the collaboration and build a program involving student and teacher exchange in both directions. The Swedish government funds the Linnaeus-Palme exchange program to support building long-term relations between Higher Education institutions.

Work with the orchestra

Liesl van der Merwe is one of two conductors of the North-West Youth Orchestra (NWYO). The orchestra consists of more than 40 members and rehearses on Friday afternoons. As part of the Linnaeus-Palme exchange, we started working with the orchestra, combining rehearsals with eurhythmics workshops, during which we worked on the musical pieces they were rehearsing at the time. Every year Liesl chose the repertoire, started to rehearse with the orchestra and told Eva about the difficulties they were facing and what musical aspects she wanted the students to develop. Then Eva planned a workshop focusing on those difficulties, the musical structure, and the musical expression. A second goal for the workshops was to work on the musical aspects in a way that also included the social aspects of an orchestra, such as communication, listening to each other, and bonding.

When we started these sessions, the orchestra first played through the piece and then Eva gave a Eurhythmics workshop for the whole orchestra. After the workshop, they played the piece again, followed by a joint reflection about their experiences. Directly after the rehearsal, we did individual interviews with those who wanted to participate.

We worked with the following repertoire:

- 2014: Danzon No. 2, Arturo Márquez, arranged by Juan Villodre
- 2015: Dance of the Gypsy, Camille Saint-Saëns, arranged by Kirt Mosier
Danzon No. 2, Arturo Márquez, arranged by Juan Villodre
- 2016: Sinfonia Concertante Polonaise by Franz Danzi
Chicago, John Kander, arranged by Ted Ricketts
- 2018: Gershwin by George! Arr. Jerry Brubaker - Feat. Strike up the Band! I Got Rhythm;
Embraceable You; An American in Paris; Prelude II; Summertime; Rhapsody in
Blue
- 2019: Two South American Tangos: 1. El Choclo, 2. La Comparsita
Masquerade suite from the incidental music to Levmontov's play, by Aram
Khachaturian

Examples of activities

During the eurhythmics workshops with the youth orchestra, the whole group was together in the same room, but we switched between working individually, in pairs, in groups of four or everybody together. We also switched between moving to music played on the piano and to recorded music. Sometimes Eva led the movement through drumming or singing.

Most of the time, we focused on "Show what you hear", requiring the instrumentalists to listen to various aspects of the music such as rhythms, tempo, metre, division, phrasing, instruments, solos, staccato/legato, etc. Eva gave instructions, and then the participants worked together with improvised movement. We worked with one aspect at a time, using one part of the music. At the end of the workshop, we put all the parts together and performed the whole piece in the same way and with the same partners as we had rehearsed. Eva planned this carefully in advance so that the transition between the different parts would work smoothly.

In many of the workshops, we used objects such as balls, scarves, large plastic rings and chopsticks. The use of objects helps to improve focus. It is also a tool for making the music visible, for example, bouncing a ball for marking accents or using a scarf to show the length of a phrase. If this is combined with different colours for different instruments or if the objects are passed from one person to another at the beginning of a new phrase or a new part of the music, it can help orchestra members to gain a better understanding of the musical structure.

Gershwin by George!

This medley consists of seven parts in different tempi and characters. To make it easier for the students to change between those styles when playing, we practised the work using different kinds of movement. Special focus was placed on quick changes between the subdivision in straight eighth notes and the “jazz feeling” of the triplets.

We worked with one section at a time in various group constellations. In some sections, we focused on the rhythmical aspects, and in other sections, we focused on the character of the solos or on the different voices and instruments. The solos were shown by objects, and some rhythms were performed with chopsticks.

Two South American Tangos: 1. El Choclo

In this piece, we focused on direction, rhythmical aspects and on understanding the style of a tango. One activity was walking in pairs in front of each other with hands together and gently pushing each other backwards and forward in straight lines. While facing each other, one person in the pair walks backwards, and the other person in the pair walks forward. This walking back and forth should then follow the phrasing, first only walking on the beat, but later walking the rhythm of the bass line.

Waltz from the Masquerade suite

The workshop started with exploring the waltz character and swinging in different ways. Then we moved to rhythms and accents. One of the motifs is repeated many times in the piece. In this motif, two voices take turns, with a series of running eighth notes like a question and answer and ending on an accentuated note together. In pairs, the students followed different voices, taking turns running beside each other. The intention was for them to reach the same point on the final accent so that they could clap the accent toward each other.

Dance of the Gypsy

First, we worked individually, then in pairs and finally, two pairs formed a group of four. We started showing the length of single notes played by the piano and continued with the length of a phrase, first by drawing lines in the air and then by using meter-long elastic band loops. After exploring the phrases two by two with elastic bands, we continued in a group of four.

In the second part of the piece, the groups of four improvised a dance together, following Eva's directions; for example,

- “Walk this rhythm while changing places with your partner.”
- “Show this rhythm with your arms and focus on the difference between the long and short notes” (as prepared at the beginning of the workshop).
- “In this part, you fly away from your group like butterflies but listen to the music when it is time to return to the group.”

By following the instructions, the musical structure was made visible and clear, and when a part was repeated but changed from minor to major, Eva asked them to show this change in tonality. At the coda, they had the freedom to decide how the piece should end.

Danzon No. 2

The first year we worked with the Danzon, we only focused on some difficult parts where the students struggled rhythmically. The meter changed between 4/4, 6/8 and 7/8, sometimes with only one bar at a time written in each meter. For each time signature, Eva showed an easy clapping pattern, which emphasised the division. The patterns were played on different parts of the body, but always with a downward direction on the first beat. We wanted to show the students a way of working that they could also use when playing other pieces, and therefore we used patterns that can be performed while sitting in an orchestra. After learning the patterns, we went through the difficult part of the piece, only clapping the meter, not focusing on the rhythms or melodies. When they could perform this, we added the rhythms by reading their parts aloud while clapping.

Procedures

Approach

We followed a basic qualitative approach. We believe that knowledge is socially constructed and that we make sense of our experiences through social interaction. As is typical in basic qualitative research (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015), we were interested in the following:

1. How did the youth orchestra members interpret their experiences of learning orchestral music through eurhythmics in a group?
2. What meaning did they ascribe to their experiences?

Data collection

More than 40 members of the NWYO participated in the annual eurhythmics workshops. However, only those who were willing, were interviewed, or commented during the focus group interviews. We worked in this way for five years, and we have interview data from three years, 2015, 2018 and 2019. Some participants, like Simon, Khune and Melinda, participated in more than one interview.

Table 1: The interview and participant distribution over the years

| 19 Interview participants | Individual interviews pseudonyms | Instrument family | Focus group interviews pseudonyms | Instrument family |
|----------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|
| 2015: 5 Participants | Kathy | Percussion | Selene Ruben Basimane Tebogo | Woodwinds Percussion Strings |
| 2018: 7 Participants | Jennifer Donathan Teresa Khune Bianca Simon Thandi | Strings Woodwinds Percussion | | |

| | | | | |
|--------------------------|---|-----------------------|--|-----------------------|
| 2019: 11 Participants | Melinda Heather Simon Khune Kenny Cara | Strings Percussion | Janice Melinda Ernest Simon Anne | Strings Percussion |
|--------------------------|---|-----------------------|--|-----------------------|

Eva conducted interviews (Table 1) with orchestra members after learning the orchestra music through eurhythmics. These interviews were transcribed and analysed using ATLAS.ti 22 (Frieze, 2019). A thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2013) revealed the emergent codes, categories, and themes. These themes helped us understand what meaning the orchestra members ascribed to their experiences of learning orchestra music through eurhythmics.

The six themes emerged as a result of analysing the transcribed interviews. We followed Creswell & Poth's (2016) data analysis spiral. Firstly, we organised the data in ATLAS.ti. Secondly, we read and wrote memos about emergent ideas. Thirdly, we described and classified codes into themes. Fourthly we developed and assessed our interpretations of the data, and lastly, we represented the data in the following findings section.

Findings

Theme 1: Social interaction – “They just opened up completely.”

In the eurhythmics sessions, “we all moved together”. While we moved together, “we were aware of each other” (Janice, 2019) and “attentive to what they do” (Teresa, 2018). Khune (2018) explained that eurhythmics “helps with interacting with other people as well as learning to meet people in a new way, like in music. It is unusual.” Simon (2019) enjoyed how everyone “opened up completely.”

Theme 2: Enjoyment – “You see their view of the music; it was very much fun.”

The orchestra members gave three reasons why they enjoyed the sessions. Firstly, “It felt more energetic. We felt more alive and one with the music” (Melinda, 2019). Secondly, Cara (2019) explained that “it is fun to do something different than usual”. Thirdly, many orchestra members said that they enjoyed becoming aware of the other parts. “Now you can actually hear this person has a solo, and that person has a solo. So, for me, it is inspiring, and it is so much fun” (Teresa, 2018). Melinda (2019) said that, while moving, “you see the other people’s part, and you see their view of the music. So, it was very much fun”.

Theme 3: Better understanding – “We understand what the piece wants from us.”

Becoming aware of the other parts gives a better understanding of the music (Bianca, 2018). Orchestra members noted that they “got a much better holistic view” (Ruben, 2015) since the movement changed their memory of the music (Heather, 2019). The difficult transition passages, especially, became easier (Tebogo, 2015) because they could anticipate the larger structure of the music (Ruben, 2015). Not only did the orchestra members’ holistic understanding improve but their understanding of “the rhythms have [also] improved, it is easier to hear where they are supposed to be” (Donathan, 2018). Bianca (2018) said, “I really understand the rhythms better”. Simon (2018) pointed out participating in eurhythmics “made us think of the music in a different way”. Eurhythmics “helped us understand how to play the music and how the music wants to be played. So, we understand what the piece wants from us.” (Jennifer, 2018).

Theme 4: Empowerment – “I felt more confident playing it.”

Eurhythmics empowered the orchestra members with confidence (Bianca, 2018) to the extent that they wanted to impart it to others. Heather (2019) stated: “I went from having

absolutely no clue to being a really strong student. I understood what was going on, and I absolutely loved it. So, I want to go further in this, and I want to learn more about it, and I myself want to be a Dalcroze teacher one day because I have learned so much". Similarly, Khune (2019) said it has "been amazing because I have been using movement for teaching. I teach little kids. I go to public schools, and with special needs kids, it really comes in handy."

Theme 5: Expression – "You played as if you were the music."

Eurhythmics "made us feel the music much better" (Jennifer, 2018) "It felt as if the music became part of you. So, I kind of felt the music inside. You played as if you were the music" (Kathy, 2015). We became "one with the music" (Melinda, 2019). Khune (2019) explained that "motion evokes emotion. So, I think moving around brings up the energy".

Theme 6: Improved performance – "You listen more."

Eurhythmics increased musical awareness. It "helps with keeping time and listening to people around you" (Khune, 2018). "Where I was previously just focused on my part, I could now listen to the other students and music instruments playing" (Bianca, 2018). Simon (2018) summed it up by stating that "it made us think of the music in a different way, which just made us play better".

Discussion

Crossing borders in a multicultural South African youth orchestra refers to bridging social capital, the connection between orchestra members who are dissimilar. Connections develop that link orchestra members across societal divides, such as language, race, class, or religion (Claridge, 2018). In the youth orchestra, friendships develop between people from different cultural and socio-economic backgrounds and ages. It was interesting to see the role that eurhythmics and working in different group constellations played in crossing borders. Participants became more aware of each other; they synchronised, got to know each other, and opened up to each other. Orchestra members listened to each other socially and musically. The enjoyment of becoming aware of other musical parts opened orchestra members' minds and helped them to understand the music better. This aligns with Fredrickson's (2013) broaden and build theory. She explains that positive emotions open our minds and increase our perceptual abilities. Both the social aspect and the better musical understanding led to better musical performance. Therefore, we argue that eurhythmics is useful for crossing borders and learning music in a youth orchestra.

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Rhythmics Festival 60+ – What Boundaries have been Crossed?

Catherine Oppliger-Mercado & Arielle Zaugg-Brunner



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In 1989, Catherine Oppliger obtained her licence in Jaques-Dalcroze eurhythmics at the Conservatory of Biel, then the Superior Diploma of the Jaques-Dalcroze method in 1993 at the Jaques-Dalcroze Institute in Geneva (IJD). In 2013 she completed the post-graduate training for teaching seniors (IJD). She is a member of the college of the Institut Jaques-Dalcroze and currently teaches at the Haute École Pédagogique BEJUNE (HEP-BEJUNE) as well as at the Conservatoire de musique neuchâtelois CMNE, site de Neuchâtel. She has published a collection of five songbooks for children, *Amuse-Bouches*, published by Editions LEP in collaboration with Christine Croset (eurhythmics teacher at the HEP Vaud and in the primary schools of the canton of Vaud). Her interests in the field of eurhythmics are teaching seniors as well as teaching the principles of the Jaques-Dalcroze method to future primary school teachers at the HEP.



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In 1989, Arielle Zaugg-Brunner obtained her degree in Jaques-Dalcroze eurhythmics at the Conservatory of Bienne. In 2005, she trained to welcome trainees from the Haute Ecole Pédagogique in the framework of her courses at the public school of the canton of Vaud. In 2013, she took the post-graduate course at the IJD to teach eurhythmics to seniors. For the past thirty years, she has been teaching eurhythmics with enthusiasm in various music schools in the canton of Vaud and in the public school system. In 2014, in collaboration with the ESML, she created senior eurhythmics classes in two locations in the city of Lausanne. She has been promoting her classes through various projects: workshops, discovery days, and a 60+ rhythmic festival with the Neuchâtel Conservatory. In 2021, interested in other forms of teaching, she is developing a project to integrate French for young children through music and movement, in collaboration with another musician and a neighbourhood centre.

Catherine Oppliger-Mercado and Arielle Zaugg Brunner are Rhythmics teachers who have been teaching in French-speaking Switzerland for more than 30 years, mainly with young children. They wanted to broaden their professional horizons by following postgraduate training for seniors in 2012 and 2013 at the Jaques-Dalcroze Institute (IJD) in Geneva. They each opened senior courses, one at the Neuchâtel Music Conservatory (CMNE) in 2013 and the other in 2014 at the Lausanne School of Music (EML). The purpose of this article is to relate the annual rhythmics meeting between the participants of their respective courses and to discuss the notion of boundaries, the theme of “Le Rythme”, 2023.

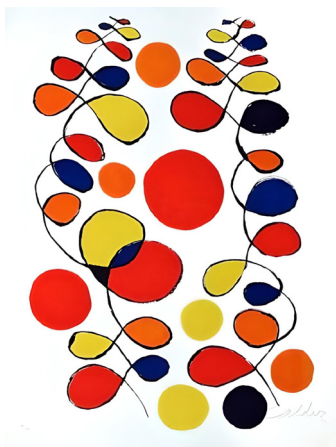
The article in French can be found on www.fier.com → documents → publications → articles

Collaborative project between three senior rhythm teachers in June 2022.

50 seniors registered and took part in a full day of rhythmics on June 4, 2022 in Neuchâtel. This is the 6th year that such days have been organised by the two rhythmics teachers from the two music schools (EML and CMNE), in Lausanne and Neuchâtel respectively. This year, Angela Lavazza (rhythmics teacher at La Chaux-de-Fonds at CMNE) joined the project.

The theme that was chosen for this day was the links between visual arts and movement. It was decided to take inspiration from paintings in order to imagine and then create rhythmics activities. The various workshops and other group activities were inspired by six paintings. At midday, everyone got together to dance to music played by a trio of young music students from the HEM (Haute École de Musique de Genève, Neuchâtel site) allowing them to appreciate the music and the live movement. Different participants answer the question: “What boundaries(s) did/could you cross through this project?” A few representative testimonies from seniors have been selected to illustrate how this artistic adventure was experienced from within by this specific audience. Two musicians and a rhythmics teacher also speak on the same subject. The article ends by comparing the experience lived by each one at the time with reflection after the event (a return on the experience in writing). Here is an example of two paintings and their illustration in motion.

Alexandre Calder’s painting entitled “Draw me a Lion” inspired different movements with the coloured balls, in particular, movements of 8 turned sideways (as in the infinity sign), allowing us to work on laterality and the fluidity of movement (see photo opposite).



© L. Gemmit

“59x39”, an XXL abstract painting by Jackson Pollock was the starting point for an improvisation carried out by all the participants at the end of the day with ribbons.



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Dalcroze in Latin America

A creative assimilation of Dalcroze Eurhythmics practice

Elda Nelly Treviño Flores



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The practice of Dalcroze eurhythmics pedagogy crosses borders, arriving to Latin America both culturally and pedagogically under the notion of “creative assimilation” - a concept introduced by Cuban anthropologist and ethnomusicologist Fernando Ortiz y Fernández (1861-1969) in 1940. The practice of Dalcroze eurhythmics in Latin American countries is creatively assimilated by using traditional rhythms, instruments, and music genres within the teaching-learning process. The essence of experiencing music with a holistic approach and therefore, maintaining the essence of humanity, provides Dalcroze eurhythmics with the possibility to cross geographical, cultural and pedagogical borders. Moreover, Latin American practitioners face unique challenges in order to experience an effective teaching practice under specific cultural conditions whilst creatively assimilating the fundamental traits of Dalcroze eurhythmics pedagogy. In order to illustrate these ideas, the perspective of Latin American Dalcroze practitioners embodied in the two special issues of Dalcroze Connections published by the Dalcroze Society of America (2021-22), will be discussed.

La pratique de la pédagogie de la rythmique Dalcroze traverse les frontières, arrivant en Amérique latine à la fois culturellement et pédagogiquement sous la notion d’«assimilation créative»—un concept introduit par l’anthropologue et ethnomusicologue cubain Fernando Ortiz y Fernández (1861-1969) en 1940. La pratique de la rythmique Dalcroze dans les pays d’Amérique latine est assimilée de manière créative par l’utilisation de rythmes, d’instruments et de genres musicaux traditionnels dans le processus d’enseignement et d’apprentissage. Le fait de vivre la musique avec une approche holistique et, par conséquent, de maintenir l’essence de l’humanité, donne à la rythmique Dalcroze la possibilité de traverser les frontières géographiques, culturelles et pédagogiques. En outre, les praticiens latino-américains sont confrontés à des défis uniques afin d’expérimenter une pratique d’enseignement efficace dans des conditions culturelles spécifiques tout en assimilant de manière créative les traits fondamentaux de la pédagogie de la rythmique Dalcroze. Afin d’illustrer ces idées, la perspective des praticiens dalcroziens latino-américains incarnée dans les deux numéros spéciaux de Dalcroze Connections publiés par la Dalcroze Society of America (2021-22), sera discutée.

Dalcroze eurhythmics: a music pedagogy that preserves the essence of humanity

In a world connected through digital media, music educators, regardless of the level of musicianship taught, are constantly challenged to find effective ways to create significant musical experiences for students, particularly in diverse cultural contexts. The practice of Dalcroze eurhythmics pedagogy outside the European cultural context where it was created by Emile Jaques-Dalcroze during the first half of the XX century, is a venture not easy to embrace.

A holistic approach of education is centered in a dynamic process of self consciousness within an essential education of the person. The person aims towards self discovery of his/her innate capacities, and growth on behalf of the environment (González Garza, 2017). In that sense, Jaques-Dalcroze conceives music as a means of pursuing inner balance through a self-reflection process which invites the person to foster his/her individual capacities (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921/1967).

The uniqueness of the Jaques-Dalcroze pedagogy which addresses music education through the five dimensions of the human being, and the preservation of the essence of humanity may be summarised in the following basic principles implied in the four areas of study (eurhythmics, solfège, improvisation, and plastique animée): (a) the movement of the human body as the starting point, (b) the body as a means of expression to experience music, (c) the growth of the person based on the transfer of his/her sensory experience to cognition and emotion, (d) the person as social being in constant relationship to others

(e) musical rhythm as an expression of the soul to reinforce the essential education of the person (Greenhead, 2015).

Within Dalcroze pedagogy, *plastique vivant* allows the person to feel and express music kinaesthetically for his/her own pleasure; therefore, becoming herself an entire art in contact with life and movement (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921/1967). In that sense, with body improvisation, the person is free to select the movement through a sensual observation of herself and others, fostering self-affirmation and affirmation in the world (Zaiser, 2017).

Even though the essence of the human being is present worldwide, regardless of race, and geography, cultural borders may not be easy to cross in an attempt to implement a pedagogical practice, particularly when there is an absence of the understanding of cultural heritage of a specific country. In my article titled “Artistry: the cornerstone of Dalcroze eurhythmics” published in 2021 in *Le Rythme*, I briefly address the issue related to the influence of cultural variables upon its practice and how the richness and openness of this music pedagogy may lead to its transformation depending on the culture. For this reason, in the present article I would like to continue this discussion further by looking at Dalcroze eurhythmics practice in Latin America through under the lens of the concept of transculturation and creative assimilation by Fernando Ortiz y Fernández.

The practice of Dalcroze eurhythmics pedagogy in Latin America

The two volumes of *Dalcroze Connections* published by the Dalcroze Society of America in 2021 and 2022 dedicated to the practice of Dalcroze eurhythmics in Latin America, provide a contemporary perspective of the history and pedagogical practices throughout the continent.¹ The beginnings of Dalcroze eurhythmics practice in Latin America can be traced back to as early as 1938 with Lía Nercessian de Sirouyan in Argentina (Sánchez, 2021), and to around 1944 with Irene Brosse in Guatemala (Batres Moreno, 2022); however, Argentina is the sole country in Latin America which has maintained an uninterrupted practice of Dalcroze pedagogy beginning with the work of Mme Sirouyan up to the present (Cernik, 2021).

There are several factors which may explain, at least partially, the absence of continuity of the practice of Dalcroze pedagogy in Latin American countries. Among those, there is a distinction between the more evident factors such as: a) social and economic issues, b) the large geography of Latin America, c) the volatility of macro and micro institutions, d) physical infrastructure, e) high costs to have a practitioner who holds the Diplôme Supérieur, f) difficult team work, g) lack of self-efficacy of students, h) limiting beliefs (Del Bianco, 2021), and the more subtle or underlying factors related to cultural heritage (Treviño Flores, 2021).

In order to discuss the latter category, I will reflect upon the notions of transculturation and creative assimilation first introduced by the Cuban anthropologist and ethnomusicologist Fernando Ortiz y Fernández in 1940 in his essay titled *Contrapunteo cubano del tabaco y el azúcar* (Cuban counterpoint/confrontation of tobacco and sugar) (Ortiz y Fernández, 1978). Ortiz’ ideas have deeply influenced Latin American thought in relation to the intricate cultural relationship with our European and prehispanic roots during and after the colonial period and up to the present. Moreover, since Jaques-Dalcroze pedagogy has European origin and was conceived within a European society, I consider important to reflect upon the interplay between cultural factors that either favour or challenge its practice in Latin American countries.

1 See <https://dalcrozeusa.org/resources/publications/dalcroze-connections/>

Transculturation as an enrichment process between creative cultural interactions

I will draw attention to the difference between the concepts of acculturation and transculturation. According to the Dictionary of the Royal Academy of Spain (Diccionario de la Real Academia Española, 2022), to acculturate is “to incorporate elements of another culture to an individual or group of people”. This definition which implies a passive role of persons, contrasts with that of the Oxford Dictionary which reads “to change so that you become more like people from a different culture, or to make someone change in this way”. This definition implies an active role of the person during the process. (Oxford English Dictionary, 2022).

On the other hand, transculturation is the reception of forms of a given culture by a different one, which substitute its original forms either partially or totally (Diccionario de la Real Academia Española, 2022). Furthermore, the Collins dictionary reads: “is the introduction of nonnative elements into an established culture” (Collins Dictionary, 2022). It is interesting to notice the differences in definition between the Spanish and English dictionaries. The Spanish definitions seem to me to be closer to the original meaning of the concept; however, the depth of the notion of transculturation explored by Fernando Ortiz goes beyond the brief descriptions provided by dictionaries in both languages. For this reason, I will present a brief background of historical conditions which gave birth to Ortiz’ innovative concept of transculturation.

Historical overview of transculturation and creative assimilation of European music practices in Latin America

The settlement of the colonial system in Latin America caused different cultural impact in each region according to its own cultural configuration and historic vicissitudes. For this reason, new transculturation processes of resistance were created in Latin American cultures as a means to survive European hegemony (Marrero León, 2013). According to Ortiz y Fernández (1978), transculturation differs from acculturation in that it not only implies the acquisition of a new culture, but also the simultaneous loss of a precedent culture, which in turn, implies a deculturization. As a result, new cultural phenomena possibly named neoculturation were created (p. 118). Moreover, transculturation refers to the permeability of practices within a culture once a different one is imposed on the former (Lora Bombino, 2016).

In the case of Spain, it was impossible to reproduce its culture in Latin America within its natural cultural, economic, and social conditions; therefore, it was impossible to insert Spanish cultural practices in an organic way, including its symbolic values and inherent capacities of its musical culture. Nevertheless, in Latin American cities, music styles and performance practices were creatively assimilated. For this reason, European musical culture was transposed to Latin America in an inorganic way, through a continuous and delayed process of adaptation (Córdova de la Paz, 201, p. 180-190).

Dr. Jesús C. Romero, Mexican musicologist from the beginning of the XX century, states that the evangelism enforced by the religious orders during the colony gave birth to the symbiosis between indigenous and European music. Moreover Dr. Romero asserts that the Hispanic factor of our musical creolism was plain chant promoted by the monks, due to its similarity in the ways pentatonic scales are used by indigenous music (1930).

It is important to remember that for centuries the European Catholic Church has attempted to bring its value system to Latin America and therefore, started specific actions to reach that goal. In relation to music practices, the following actions were promoted by the Catholic church: to have a constant presence of music in the missions by religious orders (Pauta, 2019, p. 167), to bring European *Kapellmeister* to train musicians among the indigenous and

creole population, and to have creole musicians formed in Europe to return to Latin America with new knowledge and expertise. Regardless of these efforts, the expertise and tradition of plain chant, as many other European music expressions, could not be inserted in an identical way to that of Europe because the Latin American context lacks the historic and cultural background which gives meaning to the preservation, development, and continuity of the practice. Therefore, the continuity in the transculturation process, according to Fernando Ortiz y Fernández, is achieved through a process of creative assimilation, thus creating a new expression of musical form (Córdova de la Paz, 2011, p. 184-190).

A process similar to that described in the preceding paragraph, is developing within the practice of Dalcroze eurhythmics in Latin America since a few decades up to the present. Attempts are constantly made to establish the practice of this music pedagogy either by having guest specialists from Europe formed at the Institut Jaques-Dalcroze (IJD) in Geneva, or through the training of Latin American music teachers at the IJD who return to their native countries in an attempt to preserve the practice of Dalcroze eurhythmics the same way it is done in Switzerland. However, regardless of these efforts, it has not been possible to spread the practice strongly and widely enough.

Facing these facts, I raise the following question: *is the practice of Dalcroze eurhythmics pedagogy going through a process of transculturation and creative assimilation in Latin America?* In an attempt to provide an answer, I will present similarities between the music practices of ethnic groups and those of Dalcroze pedagogy. Furthermore, I will discuss a few of the indicators of creative assimilation present in the articles written by my Latin American colleagues and myself in the two volumes of *Dalcroze Connections* dedicated to the practice of Dalcroze eurhythmics in Latin America (2021-22), in the hope of raising more questions to reflect upon the continuity of this music pedagogy into the future.

Creative assimilation of the practice of the Dalcroze eurhythmics pedagogy in Latin American countries

Improvisation and group music making: a key element of music practice among ethnic groups and Dalcroze eurhythmics pedagogy. Different from the music practice in Western Europe since the Middle Ages which created a highly developed notational system, the musical practices of ethnic groups are transmitted orally as a result of the opposition of two contrasting social classes (Córdova de la Paz, p. 65). Furthermore, improvisation (in ethnic communities) with the body, voice, and instruments comes naturally from early in life done either individually or in groups, and in different social occasions. Similarly, in the context of formal music education, improvisation within Dalcroze pedagogy is one of the three principal branches and is one of the distinctive traits of its practice (Le Collège de l'Institut Jaques-Dalcroze, 2020, p. 21). Moreover, improvisation privileges play and imagination; it is based on inner hearing and kinaesthetic responses, and develops flexibility, memory, attention, and dissociation (Sourisse, 2017).

Flexibility: a natural attribute of ethnic groups and a trait of Dalcroze eurhythmics pedagogy.

Within an improvisatory environment, Dalcroze practitioners create new learning possibilities for the group in a continuous adaptation process (adaptation in this sense, implies flexibility to change responses according to the music) (Arús Leita, 2013).

The interaction of musical discourse, and instruments of Latin American ethnic groups with those from Europe during the colonisation period, created effective ways of communication among social groups. Moreover, sincretic music practices favoured European traditions rather than those from Latin American (Pauta, 2019, p. 167). Alongside, the

music theory inherent to the ethnic musical practices is pertinent to each culture as well as its own way to conceive the world (Farías Vásquez & Bulicic Auspont, 2022).

Flexibility as a distinctive trait of Latin American Dalcroze eurhythmics practitioners.

Referring to the geographic and financial limitations that Latin American countries face, mentioned by Silvia del Bianco (Del Bianco, 2021, p. 4-5), the certification programs both in Mexico and Chile, (where none of the native Dalcroze specialists holds the *Diplôme Supérieur*), the program is organised in intensive modules during summer or holiday periods, in order to minimise travel expenses for international faculty and students (Cernik, 2021; Treviño Flores, 2021). As well, in the case of the program held at the Conservatorio de las Rosas in México (2012-16) we adapted to the facilities the institution offered: for instance, classrooms not ideally suitable for Dalcroze eurhythmics, very few pianos, among other issues.

In relation to curriculum design, the syllabi of the certification programs in Latin America have been creatively adapted according to the competences the entering students have and the number of hours taught. Likewise, the programs are based on the model from Spain. In the case of México, the title of the certificate reads: “certificado para la aplicación de principios de la rítmica Jaques-Dalcroze en el ámbito profesional” (certificate for the application of Dalcroze eurhythmics principles in the professional setting) (Treviño Flores, 2021, p. 9).

Oral transmission: common to the practice of both ethnic music and Dalcroze eurhythmics.

One of the aspects clearly emphasised in the *Dalcroze Identity* document (Le Collège de l’Institut Jaques-Dalcroze, 2020) is the richness of the practice which allows diverse applications and interpretations around the world acknowledging its oral transmission through generations of practitioners (p.6). The article written by Karen Pérez Vila is an illustrative example of the way she creatively assimilates the basic principles of Dalcroze eurhythmics into her music teaching practice with children in her native Bolivia. The introductory paragraphs describe the two categories of Bolivian music of today which emphasise the importance of music made by ethnic groups both in the urban context and in rural areas (Pérez Vila, 2021). As mentioned earlier, a distinctive trait of music created by ethnic groups is its oral transmission from one generation to the next “in such a natural way that adults and children of multiple generations could find themselves playing a *pinkillada* or a *chovena* at town festivities without having studied these genres methodically and rigorously” (p. 22). Therefore, the oral transmission of their music practice explains the absence of documental evidence. As stated by Córdova de la Paz, orality as a means towards creation, conservation, and transmission of culture has been a constant need of the most vulnerable groups (Córdova de la Paz, 2011, p. 65) such as ethnic groups in Latin America; oral transmission is the consequence of the opposition of two contrasting social classes (in this case, Spanish and ethnic groups).

One of the aims of Dalcroze eurhythmics practice is to create meaningful musical experience through the senses and to transfer kinaesthetic and aural knowledge to theoretical concepts (Phillips-Silver & Trainor, 2007) which is in concordance with a practical or oral transmission of music such as the *sicureada*. Therefore, it does not surprise that Karen’s students naturally learned the song she chose (*Muchachita, flor hermosa*/Little girl, beautiful flower) by improvising and performing its rhythmic cells with their bodies. Moreover, by creatively assimilating the principles of Dalcroze pedagogy, Karen followed the objective of the Bolivian National Education Program which aims for the preservation of native music (Pérez Vila, 202 pp. 23-24).

In Chile, the music teaching practice of Ana Elena Buitrón Romero, a native Mexican currently living in this country, is another example of creative assimilation of the principles of Dalcroze eurhythmics like that of Karen Pérez Vila in Bolivia. The music from the ethnic group Mapuche native from the Araucanía region in Chile is full of improvisation, contrast of registers, and call-and-response singing along with the accompaniment of the kultrún (Mapuche drum) (Buitrón Romero, 2022). Similar to Pérez Vila, Buitrón Romero works with the rhythmic cell of the “cuatrina” (four sixteenth notes) in several permutations. Furthermore, in her article, Ana Elena offers examples (in Western-Europe notation) of genres such as the *huayno*, *rin*, and the *costillar* where we can appreciate simple and compound meters, regular and irregular phrases, syncopation, among other “themes” widely used in Dalcroze eurhythmics.

As Buitrón writes, the *huayno* is the representative musical genre from the Andean region in South America which extends to Northern Chile. This dance represents the commingling of the Quechua, Aymara, and Spanish cultures (p. 4). In contrast, the Argentinian *baguala*, from the Northwest of the country, is a prehispanic improvisatory song accompanied by a *caja* (drum played by the singer) in ternary rhythm (Cernik, 2021, p. 23).

The development of creativity through body, vocal, and instrumental (mainly piano) improvisation is one of the pillars of Dalcroze eurhythmics (Hille, 2011). In its application to piano teaching for young beginners, Verónica Jiménez Quesada from Costa Rica creatively adapts her group piano teaching incorporating Cost Rican traditional children’s tales. Formed at the Institut Jaques-Dalcroze (IJD) in Geneva, Verónica now teaches in her native country the way she learned in Switzerland; however, she contextualises her practice to her culture. At first, piano technique is taught through improvisatory games as the teacher becomes a model for improvisation resources; once those are internalised, students develop their own musical discourse (Jiménez Quesada, 2021, p. 26). As well, Maristella Jiménez Quesada, also formed at the IJD, takes advantage of her competences in improvisation applied to solfège classes with children and teenagers from Costa Rica (Jiménez Quesada, 2022).

Final remarks

Through writing this article I have reflected upon the practice of Dalcroze eurhythmics in Latin America, understood as a music teaching pedagogy which has crossed continental borders -from Europe to America- (conceived as an entire continent). In an attempt to better understand my reality and that of my colleagues who have similar cultural backgrounds, and considering an ethnomusicological perspective, I think Latin American practitioners of Dalcroze eurhythmics face a double challenge to deliver an effective and meaningful musical experience to students: a) above all, to never forget that the music skills and competences aimed to be developed in students must be taught from an ethnomusicological standpoint of intercultural openness and through the transmission of values from various cultures. That means: a) to think of our teaching practice in a holistic way, considering the meaning and function of our musical practices in the different groups of society to foster the creation of new musical forms of expression rather than the mere repetition of others (Pauta, 171); b) to be creative and flexible to assimilate the essence of Dalcroze eurhythmics pedagogy in order for both our students and ourselves to “creatively appropriate” it, make it ours, and flourish by making music with our entire selves.

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Should Dalcroze Eurhythmics Training Be Provided to All Educators — Not Just Music?

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Within the last eighteen years, U.S. school populations have shifted dramatically. There are now more students with anxiety, depression, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism spectrum disorders, and behavioural classifications. According to the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention these account for roughly 20 million students. In addition, the National Centre for Educational Statistics reports 15% of American public school students require school based services like occupational, physical and speech therapies — roughly 7.2 million children. These students demand more creative and dynamic teachers — yet, teacher training in the U.S. remains relatively the same. Through my experience and research as a eurhythmics teacher, I believe Dalcroze training can provide the types of creative techniques, practices and mindset modern educators must have. This paper will highlight personal experiences as well as research to shows the effectiveness of eurhythmics within varied student populations as well as with teachers and therapists.

Au cours des dix-huit dernières années, les populations scolaires américaines ont changé de façon spectaculaire. Il y a maintenant plus d'étudiants souffrant d'anxiété, de dépression, de troubles de l'attention avec hyperactivité (TDAH), de troubles du spectre autistique et de classifications comportementales. D'après les Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, ils représentent environ 20 millions d'étudiants. En outre, le National Center for Educational Statistics rapporte que 15 % des élèves des écoles publiques américaines ont besoin de services scolaires tels que des thérapies occupationnelles, physiques et orthophoniques, soit environ 7,2 millions d'enfants. Ces élèves ont besoin d'enseignants plus créatifs et dynamiques. Pourtant, la formation des enseignants aux États-Unis reste relativement la même.

Grâce à mon expérience et à mes recherches en tant que professeur de rythmique, je pense que la formation Dalcroze peut fournir les types de techniques créatives, les pratiques et l'état d'esprit que les éducateurs modernes doivent avoir. Cet article met en lumière des expériences personnelles ainsi que des recherches démontrant l'efficacité de la rythmique au sein de diverses populations d'élèves ainsi qu'avec des enseignants et des thérapeutes.

Introduction

I am a music educator and Dalcroze eurhythmics teacher, and have spent the last nineteen years teaching varied student populations. I currently teach in three schools, each serving a unique population: students on the Autism spectrum, developmentally and/or physically disabled students, middle-high school students classified as at-risk with behavioural and/or emotional diagnoses. I am humbled by how effective eurhythmics-based teaching is within these populations. My training allows the ability to develop and apply exercises and lessons that work across each population and age with very little adjustment. Being a eurhythmics teacher has granted me an approach that carries a highly creative as well as adaptive mindset. My experiences have made me believe Dalcroze training can benefit *all* teachers — not just those who teach music.

How American schools have changed

In 1990, the United States passed The Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), an amendment to an existing law known as the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (1975). Within IDEA is a key piece of language stating how children with disabilities are not only entitled to a free public education, but also the individual services that can enhance that education. These services include occupational, speech, physical as well behavioural therapies, and can expand into other protocols.

IDEA came when advances in medical, scientific and academic research were leading to a better understanding of childhood disabilities. In addition, technological advance allowed for this research to be widely and easily accessible. This all coalesced into more thorough

and earlier diagnoses, which led to new and improved therapy protocols. Children with diagnoses and classifications were suddenly progressing past developmental markers never imagined, and were now able to attend their public schools. This led to a question: *If these therapies allow children to progress developmentally, should they be included as part of their education?* The result was IDEA.

In addition, today's children and young people come into school having spent a vast majority of time on their phones. They are seemingly detached from the outside world as well as their peers. Over 50% of the American population now own a smartphone, and the effects on children and adolescents are just beginning to be understood. One study found that excessive smartphone users "...[show] impairment in cognitive control during emotional processing of angry faces and social interaction." The study also states that "...excessive smartphone use was associated with poorer sleep quality and higher perceived stress, lowered physical activity, lower muscle mass and higher fat mass...headache complaints and headache duration and frequency in migraine patients."¹

Students coming into schools are now more developmentally, neurologically and emotionally diverse. The results are a paradigm shift that has affected every aspect of American public education. School faculties now include teachers, therapists and in-class support staff such as aids and para-professionals. In-school protocols include self-contained classes of students with same or similar diagnoses, and inclusion classrooms that place diagnosed students in with those who are developing typically. Occupational, physical, and speech therapies are now a part of student early intervention programs as well as their education. Subsequently, districts not only have dedicated classrooms, but whole corridors and even buildings solely for special needs and classified populations. These developmentally diverse students require teachers and staff to be more creative and dynamic in how they approach their work.

In addition to the developmental, emotional, and neuro-diversity within student populations, many districts and communities are being impacted by environmental and/or natural disasters. As the climate continues to change, severe events like hurricanes and floods are happening more frequently and with more intensity. A January, 2022 report issued by the United States Government Accountability Office (GAO) produced data showing how between 2017-2019, 840 public school districts received some form of Federal Disaster Recovery Aid.²

A natural disaster impacted my teaching personally. Last spring, after months of COVID induced remote learning, my schools finally went back to in-person instruction. As that year came to a close, we teachers were excited for the 2021-2022 year. It would be the first "normal" one we'd had since the onset of the pandemic. Then, in September of 2021 (two days before school started) Hurricane Ida barreled up the East Coast directly impacting my region. Two of the schools I teach in were destroyed by floodwaters. As a result, our 2021-2022 school year began remotely. In October, we were relocated to two temporary buildings, but we teachers had lost everything in terms of our supplies (I lost keyboards, countless percussion instruments and my piano was found on the other end of the building in 5 feet of water). We were now returning to in-person teaching, albeit with nothing. One building we're now in is, literally, an old department store. It's been retrofitted with partitions to create "classrooms" but many of the old display cases are still visible and the space is fairly wide open.³ We have been in these locations for over a year, and will continue to be there until January, 2023.

My experience is not unique. In mid-August, the state of Kentucky was racing to get schools open after suffering massive summer floods. As one article reported: "This school

1 Wacks, Y. And Weinstein A.M. (2021). Excessive Smartphone Use Is Associated With Health Problems in Adolescents and Young Adults *Frontiers in Psychiatry*, 1-7 <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyt.2021.669042/full>

2 United States Government Accountability Office Report to Congressional Committees: "DISASTER RECOVERY: School Districts in Socially Vulnerable Communities Faced Heightened Challenges after Recent Natural Disasters" Published January, 2022

3 My "classroom" is, literally, in what was the old Ralph Lauren section.

year was supposed to mark the return of long-awaited normal, after two years in which the coronavirus pandemic cut classes short and, for a time, forced students and teachers online. But...floodwaters surged through eastern Kentucky, sweeping away the Chromebooks and covering decades of class pictures in mud and mildew.” (Cochrane, 2022)

How eurhythmics training can help

Modern day education does not just mean dynamic classrooms, but dynamic conditions in the world outside the classrooms. This demands that teachers possess creative mindsets, so when they're asked to pivot from in-person instruction; back to online; then back to in-person in a matter of days, they're able to do that. This combination of dynamic learners, as well as a changing world, is demanding that we train all teachers to think like eurhythmics teachers. Jaques-Dalcroze knew teachers needed to cross borders and think of their work in a more dynamic way when he said, “the ideal teacher must be a psychologist, a physiologist, and an artist — a complete person” (Spector, 1990, p. 134).

Imagine being a brand new fourth-grade teacher out of college. As the start of the school year approaches, you are informed that yours will be an inclusion classroom — meaning that you will have a high functioning autistic child with an aid in your class. Within the first few days, you quickly realise there are an additional two students with mental health issues. These are in addition to the 15 typically developing students. Your skillset just went from being a fourth-grade teacher to being a psychiatrist as well as someone who needs to pivot between learning styles and abilities. Has this young teacher been given the training that provides a mindset and skills to pivot, adjust, and create within a dynamic classroom?

Eurhythmics training can provide those skills.

The process of education doesn't just involve the mind. More importantly, it involves the sensory system. It is not a rote process of transferring information → quiz → test → wash, rinse repeat. A classroom full of varied learners requires a creative skillset *and* mindset. As Jaques-Dalcroze himself wrote: “it is not enough to give children and young people a general tuition founded exclusively on the knowledge of our forbears' activities...The education of tomorrow must embrace reconstruction, preparation, and adaptation...” He continues: “in my judgement, all of our efforts should be directed to training our children to become conscious of their personalities, to develop their temperaments, and to liberate their particular rhythms of individual life from every trammelling influence...the new education aiming at regulating the interaction between our nervous and our intellectual forces” (Dalcroze, 1921, p. viii). And while Dalcroze was speaking and writing in the context of music education, I am asking the question: “why can't his system apply to all of education?”

Eurhythmics trains teachers to approach their craft by not only engaging their own sensory systems, but also of their students. It reminds us that we experience the world through our bodies. Eurhythmics would be extraordinarily beneficial because it would allow teachers to open themselves up and provide a multimodal view to their work. Feelings and observations made through the experiences of movement, music, and improvisation open students and teachers up aesthetically.

Within many classes today, the odds are great that a teacher is going to have a student with a services requirement (occupational, speech, physical, and/or a behavioural therapy). That same teacher might have a student — or students — with a mental health diagnosis. Instead of walking into this situation only prepared with the general (clinical) training afforded in a typical college education department, modern educators need to approach the work with the added benefit of being a Dalcroze teacher.

Virginia Hoge Mead was a Dalcroze teacher and music educator. In her book *Dalcroze Eurhythmics in Today's Music Classroom* she described a eurhythmics teacher as someone

who activates and integrates a student's "senses, nervous system, intellect, physical body, emotions, and creative and expressive self" (Mead, 1993). In essence, a Dalcroze teacher learns to engage the whole student.

I earned my Dalcroze Elementary Certificate in 2007. One thing I began learning almost immediately was how gesture and physical movement are a much more powerful tool in not only commanding student's attention, but also in getting them to move and flow as a group. I did not realise it at the time, but this skill would become a huge piece of my teaching with hearing impaired students. Many of my students with sensory based delays like Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Pervasive Developmental Delay (PDD) are sensitive to sound. To be able to "speak" to them through movement and gesture has proven beyond valuable. This skill helped inspire me to create sensory integrated games that not only match movement with sounds, but movement with textures as well as symbols and objects. I bring objects into class that involve sandpaper, smooth surfaces, small objects, shapes, and colors and integrate them into eurhythmic based lessons. I initially do these exercises without music, then integrate the music slowly. Once I do that, the games and exercises take on a whole new dimension. To paraphrase Ms. Mead, I stimulate my students from sensory, creative, expressive, and physical perspectives. The ability to do this is a direct result of my eurhythmics training, and this caters directly to modern day student's needs.

I have students at school with diagnosed speech delays. Speech delays can make things complex because teachers and therapists are not sure how well those students are processing language as they cannot express themselves verbally. I have one student in-particular who possess very little language, and also cannot form many coherent sentences on her language board.⁴ However, during music class, this student shows signs of emotional stimulation not expressed in class or therapies. She claps along with rhythms on the piano and jumps up and down in time with my playing. She also smiles a lot.⁵ Through use of a magnetic color board to form patterns, I was eventually able to get her to open her mouth in an effort to imitate my singing of "big" vowel sounds (*Ahhh* and *Ohhh*). I eventually incorporated big, sweeping gestures and other physical movements. One day I arrived at school and walked past this student's classroom. They did not have music scheduled for that day, but as I was about to turn the corner, her teacher came running down the hall yelling for me to come to her room. Thinking something terrible happened I ran to the classroom. The teacher took my arm, and led me to the student's desk. There, on her language board, was the sentence "I Want Music" (Figure 1). Just seeing me walk past her room triggered the songs, movements, and gestures inside of her. These inspired not just a sentence, but the want to express it through language.

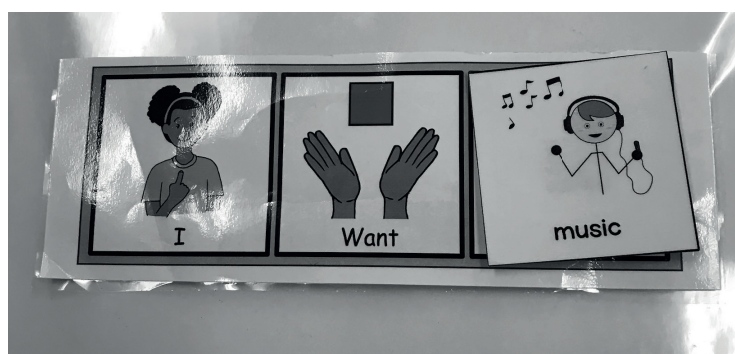


Fig. 1

- 4 The language board is a tool her teacher created for her and consist of a laminated sheet of paper with words and pictures of facial expressions that can be put together to form sentences and/or expressions. The words and expressions are fastened to the paper with velcro.
- 5 During the pandemic lockdowns, and remote instruction, her mother was present for one of our lessons and even she was surprised with how engaged her daughter was. This showed me how eurhythmics was able to translate into remote instruction and still be effective.

Eleonore Witoszynskyj was a student of Mimi Scheiblaue in the 1960's. Scheiblaue wasn't just a Dalcroze teacher, but was essential in the development of music therapy. Witoszynskyj described her training with Scheiblaue not just in the context of musical training, but in the context of education as a whole. Of her time observing, working, and training with Scheiblaue she recounted: "there was no accent on music education. Instead of that [Scheiblaue] put the accent on education in general, developing the senses, concentration, reaction and coordination, also social exercises and imagination exercises" (Habron & Witoszynskyj, 2016). I ask that you take a step back and consider that quote in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the post-pandemic world of education, it became apparent to many (perhaps for the first time) that some of the most important elements involved in education are exactly what Mimi Scheiblaue was focusing on: the senses, concentration, reaction, coordination, social and creative development — and she (a Dalcroze teacher) knew to do this in 1960!

Today's educators need training that doesn't just encourage dynamic and creative approaches, but inspires them! Teachers are expected to work in a complex modern world where significant change happens on a regular basis. I believe the two words that best sum up the required mindset of modern educators are disruption and plasticity. It's not a question of *if* your school year is going to be disrupted, but *when*. Teachers must now ask themselves questions such as *Do I possess the plasticity of thought to pivot to on-line learning and back again? Can my lesson plans be effective in a group of developmentally, socially, emotionally, and neurologically diverse students? Will this lesson plan be effective in a virtual setting? Will I be able to teach this lesson in an alternative location?* Eurhythmics training provides this perspective and equips teachers with that mindset. It provides a very special skill set: the ability to constantly be in tune with your students and be inspired by their movements, mistakes, abilities, and disabilities — as well as the physical space around them. My eurhythmics training provided the realisation that my classroom is more than a physical space. It is also a situation and phenomenon. It is where learning, discovery, awareness, awakening, and joy all occur. Dalcroze teachers gain this essential awareness because we learn to flow and work in concert *with* our students — not *above* them.

The root of being a eurhythmics teacher is allowing students to not only feel but see, discover, and express who they really are. This (I believe) is the essence of education. Eurhythmics training, therefore, shouldn't be limited to those teaching music. It can allow teachers of other subjects to tune into these qualities and apply them to how they teach their subjects, and form their classroom dynamics. Mind you this is not a novel concept. Professionals of other disciplines have been drawn to eurhythmics from the beginning. When Dalcroze was teaching at his school in Hellerau, Germany, it wasn't just musicians coming to observe and take his classes. Accomplished authors like George Bernard Shaw and Upton Sinclair came to observe and learn. In 1913, an article was published in a Boston newspaper detailing how a physical education teacher in Cambridge, Massachusetts had been incorporating eurhythmics techniques into his classes since 1908 (Heber, 1913). In 1912, a group of German physicians were attending a conference in nearby Dresden, Germany and came to Hellerau to observe Dalcroze's classes, specifically with children. The doctors were taken with what eurhythmics did for the students. They even monitored the student's vital signs before and after classes and determined that eurhythmics classes should be "...a requirement in the curriculum of the public schools" (Spector, 1990, p. 163).

American public education is at its latest point of adaptation and adjustment. The world has changed drastically, and in the last twenty-five years we have crossed every border imaginable: technological, developmental, emotional, natural, and (most recently) public health. Yet, we have not changed the way we train our teachers so they can cross into these worlds and educate the students who will be living in them. Eurhythmics training can help accomplish this.

The modern world needs to view teachers as more than “instructors”. The expectations of their work have expanded, and so must their training. Teachers now need to be designers and artists. They need to possess plasticity of thoughts and ideas that allow them to pivot amongst student learning types, classifications, and a natural world that is changing on a seemingly daily basis. My own lesson plans, as well as teaching materials, include visual and audio elements, but must now also include tactile, textural, movement, and emotional elements. These are included because they *have* to be. This hasn’t just benefitted me, but has allowed classroom teachers to see things in their students they wouldn’t have otherwise. Therapists have observed my classes, have seen students do things, and have said “I’ve never seen her do that before!” They leave with a new insight into student abilities as well as ways to reach them.

In the early spring of 2022, I was speaking to a friend whose daughter attends an academically advanced middle school. The pandemic had shuttered the school for almost a year, and my friend told me how when the school re-opened, the teachers were shocked by something: during class changes, it appeared the students had forgotten how to walk and navigate the hallways. One teacher told my friend how the students — in addition to bumping into each other and the walls — were (literally) falling down on the floor.

As a Dalcroze teacher, my first thought was *Why weren’t any movement activities introduced?* Imagine if these students had been exposed to eurhythmics exercises that reacquainted them with the time, space, and energy of group movement and interaction? Imagine if these students had experienced quick reaction games? This type of mindset didn’t exist within the school — and not just amongst teachers, but also administrators. In this scenario, eurhythmics would’ve benefited the entire school.

Eurhythmics is a system that will open teachers up to ideas like this and allow them to understand their creative selves. It’s the realisation of this creative self that will enable them to draw off their abilities — regardless of the subject they teach. This, in turn, will allow the creation of dynamic and inclusive lessons; the formulation of ideas that will enable their diverse students to flourish. Teachers need to be able to incorporate strategies that will enable their students to understand, embrace, and create in an abstract world. Our children, and the time they are living in, aren’t asking that we do this — they’re demanding it.

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Working from the Inside Out—Crossing Borders into Somatic Practices

A personal reflection on benefits of use of somatic practices in Dalcroze Eurhythmics teaching

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In this reflection on how crossing borders into Somatic practices inform my Dalcroze teaching practice, I share my experiences of working with the Somatic practices of Colleen Bartley in preparation for performing as a dancer/ musician in her structured improvisation piece “Surface Tensions of the Unknown”, performed on 9th June 2022 at The Place London as part of the Resolution Dance festival.

I am particularly interested in the questions which are arising from a perspective around institutionalised aestheticism: - the focus on the externalised view of the body that objectifies it and expects performance of a “proper” dance technique. (Green, 1999, p.81) and how there is a danger that this might lure teachers away from the somatic principles underlying Dalcroze Eurhythmics, and therefore how crossing borders into somatic practices might bring us teachers to elicit a more authentic response from our students.

J’ai écrit ici une réflexion sur la façon dont le franchissement des frontières vers les pratiques somatiques informe ma pratique d’enseignement dalcrozienne. Je partage mes expériences de travail avec les pratiques somatiques de Colleen Bartley en préparation de ma performance en tant que danseuse/musicienne dans sa pièce d’improvisation structurée «Surface Tensions of the Unknown», présentée le 9 juin 2022 à The Place London dans le cadre du Resolution Dance festival.

Je suis particulièrement intéressée par les questions qui surgissent d’une perspective autour de l’esthétisme institutionnalisé et comment il y a un danger que cela puisse attirer les enseignants loin des principes somatiques sous-jacents à la rythmique Dalcroze, et donc comment traverser les frontières dans les pratiques somatiques pourrait nous amener, nous enseignants, à susciter une réponse plus authentique de nos étudiants.

Introduction

It is May 2022; I have been invited to perform as a dancer/ musician in a structured improvisation “Surface Tensions of the Unknown” by choreographer Colleen Bartley for the Resolution festival in June 2022. In this improvisation, with another dancer, Julia Pond, we were both prepared for the performance through individual, pair, and group improvisation tasks drawn from Coleen’s somatic practices through the works of Barbara Dilley, Pauline Oliveros, Nancy Topf and Sherwood Chen.

One exercise that caught my attention – because it brought to me so many revelations – was one we carried into performance, walking on fine lines of string with eyes closed, finding pathways through feeling and sensing, and developing kinaesthetic awareness. It came to Colleen Bartley through her work with Sherwood Chen.

Creating the conditions

The studio space was set up with stones holding strings and wires in place at corners on the floor in a flag formation. We three dancers had one task; to walk the lines feeling the string under our feet as a guide, with our eyes closed. While walking I couldn’t feel the string beneath my feet. Immediately my head took over... I was failing. ‘What would Colleen think of me? Why do I lack sensitivity? Why can’t I do this?’ – my personal criticism, and my need to perform to the teacher, was overwhelming. I became aware of how my thought processes, my mind, were interfering with my body wisdom and this was something I was using as a diversion from the task itself. As I was attempting this task I reflected on when I have in the past, seen myself (and indeed others) in a Rhythmics class, signalling to the teacher that I was doing the task required rather than simply doing and being. I realised that this was a habitual way of distancing myself from accessing my authentic response, and the moment I came to that realisation I found the string under my feet.

This brings into my teaching the wider question of how we create the conditions whereby our students are freed of the need to perform to their teacher and can authentically find

presence and responses which are unfiltered. How can we ensure we create the conditions for our students to authentically connect their bodies with the work in rhythmic?

Is there a “perfect Dalcroze Body”?

I think in this instance it is helpful to look towards Litz Pisk’s book *The Actor and His Body* (1987) and consider how we as teachers can help our students access their own authentic movement.

You inhabit your body by your presence in it and by your awareness of it. You do not watch it from the outside, arrange yourself in front of the mirror, stand or walk next to yourself, observe and analyse, but connect yourself with your body and feel for an inner rightness. Awareness extends from the nakedness of your existence, devoid of any adopted attitudes. It starts with your breath, your pulsation, and your feeling for your sap from the bones to the skin. When you lie relaxed on your back and spread your weight evenly, you rely on the support of the ground and feel no need to lift or hold any part of your body (Pisk, 1987, p.11).

Somatic practices developed in the second half of the 20th century and served to liberate the body, as Doran George states “for dancers who were rejecting institutionalised aesthetics, the stories of recovery proved that more authoritarian training had interfered with bodily knowledge” (George, 2020, p. 27). How can there be a “perfect Dalcroze body”? There can only be a body. Actor training through methodologies strips the body of its habits. The neutral mask of Jaques Lecoq invites the practitioner to embody more authentically their physicality. So how do we prepare the body for Dalcroze Eurhythmics? Is it enough to say go for a walk? Or is there value in starting off with a provocation: “How do you walk”?

As *The Dalcroze Identity Document* states “[t]he characteristics of the training are connected to the underlying philosophy: the body is the locus of experience and expression, personal and artistic. The evolution of the human person depends on the ability to put physical and sensory experience at the service of thought and feeling.” (Greenhead et. al., 2006, p. 5)

The body in Dalcroze Eurhythmics is more than this, as we know; it is also a vehicle for research in action, discovery through *doing*. I believe that if the student is brought to a feeling state through somatic exercises, then the discovery is richer. We live in a time of great noise and information, we have a constant awareness of how we look, how do we peel back the information and complex identities, how do we support putting “physical and sensory experience at the service of thought and feeling” (ibid.).

Sources and solutions

Here I shall mention some of the Somatic practices I have encountered in recent years and how they could be used as a starting point even if it is to develop the Dalcroze teacher’s sensibilities and sensitivities to bring to the lessons a more intuitive approach. Even if you are not explicitly teaching these methodologies, your very embodiment will serve as an underscore to your teaching practice.

In 2014 I first encountered the Skinner Release Technique (developed in the 1960’s by Joan Skinner) taught by Gaby Agis who has been a practitioner from the start. This involved sometimes imagining the body as moss or other natural substances, feeling connections in spaces between bones, partner work, and reflection through drawing. The use of imagery draws out of the dancer/mover a way of shedding unhelpful movement habits and creating a more released way of moving, often being brought to through a deep meditative state. I was introduced to Pauline Oliveros’ *Deep Listening* in 2017 and through her work have discovered the “Extreme Slow Walk” useful as a starting point for bringing my students to consider their walking, their control and their connection to the floor. This and other

exercises are found in her book *Deep Listening: A Composer's Sound Practice* (2005, p. 20). I have also used some of her listening meditations at the start of Dalcroze lessons with children aged 11-14. 'Gaga/People' I experienced a little later, which involves imagining the body in felt ways and through teacher led visualisations (Katan, 2016). It is more physical than the Skinner Release Technique. Developed by Ohad Naharin, it is a more 21st century approach that develops movement language through imagery, layered by the practitioner to bring the dancer to a more sensed state, dancers having their attention brought to sensations. I have also followed exercises created by Nancy Topf, first published in *Contact Quarterly* in 2012. Nancy studied Dalcroze Eurhythmics as a child in, incidentally the same class as Meredith Monk. Her full writings were later published in *The Anatomy of Center* in 2022. Finally, it would be remiss of me not to mention another resource – Martha Eddy's 2016 text *Mindful Movement: The evolution of the Somatic arts and Conscious action*.

Conclusion

Bringing attention to how students feel, notice, sense; and giving them multifaceted techniques to reflect are other ways of cementing the body-sensing intelligence. Building in the lesson time a space to draw, sketch, journal, discuss with a partner are other ways by which students can document and process feelings, sensations more deeply. And asking the questions about where in the body do you feel and experience. Connecting the inner landscapes of imagination and sensation.

We can return to with more conscious practices the somatic nature of Dalcroze Eurhythmics as expanded in Habron and Greenhead's article *The Touch of Sound: Dalcroze Eurhythmics as a somatic practice* (2015).

On reflection, I feel that we teachers of the 21st Century are faced with the body of students coming to us with a mass of noise about *their* bodies and about expectations of movement. We have work to do to understand and create the conditions for learning that support the stripping away of extraneous information, preconceived ideas, biases and prejudices. We need to be mindful of the complexities that will arise within the Dalcroze space and bring our students to explore and wonder about what their body can do, not what it looks like, and moreover, not judge their body by its limitations. We can perhaps challenge those who think moving well is something learned in a ballet class and allow the space for normalising moving authentically with a consistent and deeper journey into uninhibited and authentic expression of movement from an aware sensing space, that ultimately accommodates difference through felt sensation. To develop in ourselves and our students a non-judgemental awareness of self.

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On the Necessity of the 'Gegen—Stand'¹

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1 In German, the word "Gegenstand" is versatile and can translate as *thing, article, object, subject, matter* or *purpose*. When adding a hyphen, it reveals the two words it is made up of: *Gegen* (*against, counter*) and *Stand* (*position, state*). The word creation *Gegen-Stand* therefore signifies something that counters an existing position or goes against the established state of things. Rather than the word "Widerstand" (*resistance*), it implies the materiality of the object that does the countering. The English *counteract* comes close to the original but this in turn carries a somewhat hostile notion which *Gegen-Stand* does not possess.

Jumping over one's own shadow and expanding boundaries are frequent demands in the field of music and movement through the special methodological possibilities of eurhythmics. This is true for the learners as well as for the teachers. With a view to the concept of perception of constructivism, it is first clarified why perceptions are always individual and bound to subjective experiences. Then the 'Gegen-Stand' comes into play as a surface of friction and a basis for an active and reflective engagement that is capable of producing new results.

Sauter par-dessus son ombre et repousser ses limites sont des exigences fréquentes dans le domaine de la musique et du mouvement, avec les possibilités méthodologiques spécifiques de la rythmique. Cela vaut aussi bien pour les apprenants que pour les enseignants. En se basant sur le concept de perception du constructivisme, il est d'abord expliqué pourquoi les perceptions sont toujours individuelles et liées aux expériences subjectives. Ensuite, le contre-état entre en jeu en tant que surface de friction et base d'une confrontation agissante et réfléchie, capable de produire de nouveaux résultats.

Introduction

In the field of eurhythmics, the concept of fostering creativity is at the top of the list of objectives due to the high proportion of activities involving experimentation, exploration, improvisation and composition. The notion that creativity is reserved only for geniuses endowed with special powers has long been outdated. Everybody has creative potential and we all need it to come to terms with reality by merging our fantasies, needs, expectations and experiences into subjectively meaningful units in interplay with our perception of the environment (Ammon, 1974, pp. 30-31). This everyday achievement is poles apart from the development of an artistic production with strong symbolic power and many forms of creativity lie in between (Hirmke-Troth, 2016, p. 46). The bubbling up of ideas in free play with a material, the novel combination or application of familiar patterns in an unusual context, the discovery of intuitive sources in improvisation - the list could be easily continued - are moments that not just happen when planned by the teacher. They can occur at all times and with almost any tasks that allow a certain openness to its processing, because the subjective experience of the participants leads to individual experiences, challenges and solutions. In open-minded groups this is a desired outcome and often enriches all participants' experience, including the teacher.

So how can these multiple processes be included in the planning, how can they be considered, recognised and reflected in the teaching process? It is hardly possible, and perhaps not even necessary, to trace every single experiential process in detail. However, if the teaching aims to be promoting creativity, a look at the assumptions of constructivism can contribute interesting aspects to the planning, observation and reflection of teaching settings. Constructivism is a central figure of thought in various approaches in 20th century philosophy which assumes that a perceived object is constructed by the perceiver him/herself through the process of perceiving.

Perception

The impossibility of separating the act of perception and the objects of perception from each other is a fascinating basic problem in theories of cognition, which already occupied Plato. Here the world of things, there the perceiver who, thanks to his/her sensory activities, develops a construct that s/he will never be able to compare with the *objective* object, since this would also require a perceptual activity that could only grasp certain aspects of the object. Consequently, we can never take in the *what*, but only the *how* of the external (and even more so of our internal) world. In view of the resulting infinite variety of interpretations

of what we perceive, it seems astonishing that we are able to communicate at all and to bring our individual constructions into connection and exchange with each other.

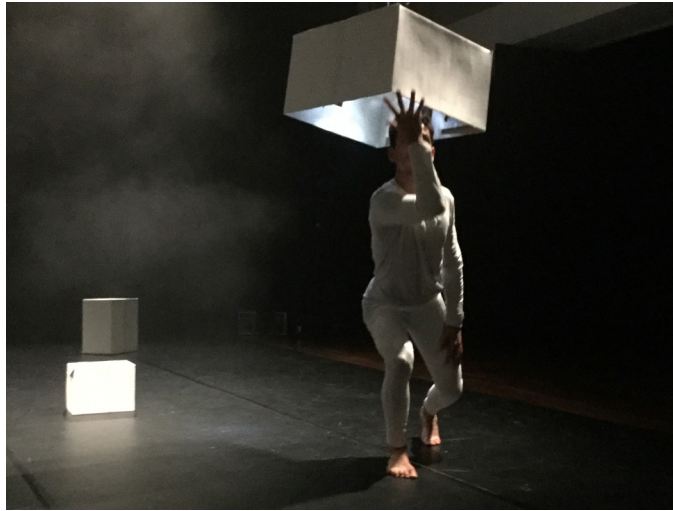
Two convictions about how to grasp this vagueness are of particular interest in the context of creativity. To put it very simply, from a science point of view the task is to understand the given structures of the world with reason, thereby to reveal its secrets and to transform them into data, concepts, analyses and tools. Despite all the progress associated with it, systematic investigation and description remain an important instrument for gaining control over our perception, or, more accurate: our experience. It also serves to classify and collectively understand phenomena, meant here in its acceptance as something that shows or reveals itself.

Representatives of constructivism reject the effort to create consistency between experience and *reality* as a prerequisite for this relationship. Our senses do not transmit things to us, but rather characteristics of things, and predominantly of things to which we direct our attention. In a sense, perception follows function. An example: the familiar request to *show what you hear* encourages to increasingly recognise and establish correspondences between musical events and the kinaesthetic sensations produced by matching movements. The search for and finding of analogies in transformation processes form an important core content in eurhythmics. However, the translation of auditory impressions into one's own (movement) expression can only reflect a certain spectrum that is given by the teacher (rhythm, melodic course, dynamics, etc.) or chosen by oneself.

The principle of Gegen-Stand

The dancer and psychologist Detlef Kappert describes the search for meaningful confrontation as essential for personal growth and artistic maturation in the context of his reflections on a teaching style that enables performance, sensitivity and artistic development (Kappert, 1993, p. 11). This in itself is nothing new. The question is: when can confrontations have a productive effect and at what level do confrontations take place? An overemphasis on performance or excessive demands in improvisation tasks that require technical skill or prior experience are more likely to lead to decreased engagement and dissatisfaction. Insufficiently focused demands create arbitrariness or helplessness. This is where Kappert introduces the term *productive uncertainty* (ibid.). A combination of words that initially makes the reader stumble, but on closer inspection opens up a space for thinking about the questions posed at the beginning. It means a kind of unsettling that releases productive forces in the confrontation with teaching content and with oneself. The concept of productive uncertainty, unlike the common understanding of creativity as a problem-solving behaviour, indicates the special responsibility of the teacher. By virtue of their competences, they set the framework for technical, aesthetic and personal challenges and look for settings in which the group is offered possibilities to connect with the confrontations in a meaningful and developmental way.

The term confrontation is used here in its meaning as comparison. It illustrates the need to create incentives to deal with the teaching material so that a process of engagement and effort is set in motion. In performance-oriented subjects such as dance, sports or instrumental lessons, the incentive is often very far removed from the current level of achievement of the learners and practitioners and addresses personal development mainly in the area of perseverance and discipline. In a eurhythmics class that wants to uncover creative potential and shape it aesthetically, confrontations continue to develop as they are happening. They float between aesthetic questions, technical challenges, issues of interaction, self-reflection and aspects of relevance for outsiders. The task of a creative teaching style is to find these Gegen-Stands, address them and to work on them constructively.



Student performing with an inspiring “Gegenstand” © D. Weise

A look back at constructivism shows not only the necessity of resistance to gain insights, but also the simple fact that our actions and cognition can only develop through dealing with obstacles. This, too, is in principle not new to all those who are familiar with the term *sensomotrics* and have told themselves in personal crises that they will eventually grow from them. However, the consequence that completely different results will develop due to the individual preconditions of the perception process is always worth emphasising. Ernst von Glasersfeld, a representative of radical constructivism, coined the German term “*Viabilität*” for this purpose, which derives from the English word *viability* and also means suitable, useful, functional (von Glasersfeld, 2012, pp. 18).

A practical example may clarify this concept. Half of an adult group listens to a short piece of music, while the other half of the group is outside the room and cannot hear the piece. Then the two groups get together in pairs and those who have heard the piece describe it verbally to their partner as best as they can. What is being described? Instrumentation, form, style, dynamic progression of the piece? Inner images that came up for the listener? Moods into which s/he was transported? Synaesthetic sensations, such as seeing colours, or kinaesthetic sensations articulated in strong gestures and body language?

All these, and possibly more variations, are individually appropriate and useful means of describing the experience. The *Gegen-Stand* here is not the piece of music, but the task of translating what is perceived into terms that, at best, turn into a musical idea again for the partner. Listening to the piece afterwards may reveal similarities and discrepancies. It shows that perception and the subsequent acts of describing the perceived basically create the auditory object in the first place, and this can already be considered a creative act.¹

Supporting creative processes

While being conscious of the tension between the diversity of individual perceptions and experiences of all participants and the search for ways to develop strong, individually expressive personalities in music and movement, teachers may first and foremost also see themselves as learners. Learners who perceive outcomes of tasks they have given, which are outside their own spectrum of experience or preconceived solutions, with curiosity. They are prepared to be surprised and catapulted back into a state of open incomprehension – a state they often demand of their groups with improvisational tasks and experimental phases. But by virtue of their professional competence, they are also able to strike a balance between

1 cf. reference to S. Ceccato, p. 29 in: *ibid.*

structure and freedom, the familiar and the new, continuity and variance in the way they work on topics. The basis for this are tasks that allow individual solutions.² Depending on the stage of development of the group and the topic, different types of tasks can be used. Some will be briefly introduced here and others can be added:

- Principle of reduction: the freedom of decision is relatively small due to given or pre-prepared material. Examples: Playing one note only, but differently each time; staying with one movement motif and deciding only when and how often it is performed in relation to the group activity; finding 20 different movement beginnings from one posture.
- Principle of transformation: Focusing the perception on certain composition features in one medium of expression leads to transfer processes in another medium of expression. Reference form, reaction time, dynamic or degree of association are variants here to further creative processes to avoid stereotyping.
- Principle of imagination: when associative images and identifications unfold their effect, completely new results and sensations can arise.³
- Paradoxical tasks: attempting the impossible is fun when there is an open and experimental mood: dancing Ravel's Bolero on one square meter; stopping a fall at the moment of tipping over; playing a familiar melody on an instrument that one has not learned.

The subsequent talking about a task's outcome should be considered in terms of its function. Especially novel experiences can still be *without language*, they are in a kind of pre-conceptual phase. As long as there is no hurry (end of the lesson!) or interrupting correction, the phase of tentative verbalisation can be rich with the fascination of discovery and discovering. The physics educationalist Martin Wagenschein calls this the "venerable state of stammering" (Wagenschein, 2009, pp. 85). Sometimes results don't need to be reviewed. Often it is the group that signals whether there is a need for discussion. Naming and categorising experiences too early can lead to a homogenisation that does not satisfactorily express the specificity of the experience. Nevertheless, verbalisation raises not only the awareness of one's own experiences, but also reveals the other participant's perception, which then have to be classified in relation to the task.

A guideline for a creative teaching style can only be derived to a limited extent from the considerations presented. Nevertheless, two conclusions can be drawn:

1. Forget, shed and shake off your own insights and ideas to really look at and listen to what is taking place. Otherwise, experiences become expectations and thus an obstacle to the originality and creative processes of others.
2. Challenge your own viability and put yourself time and again into the magical state of new, possibly first experiences.

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2 Friederike Lampert proposes an interesting outline for stimulating change in the sense of new adaptations with her model on the relationship between planning and improvisation. Lampert, F. (2007). *Tanzimprovisation*, Bielefeld (pp. 148)

3 cf. Principles for the use of imaginary images in: A. Bernard/U. Stricker/W. Steinmüller: *Ideokinese – Ein kreativer Weg zu Bewegung und Körperhaltung*, Bern 2003 (pp. 58)

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Dalcroze's "6th Sense": so Present and yet such Little Awareness!

Christine Croset



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Christine Croset gained her license in Dalcroze Eurhythmics in 1983. She has taught as well with young pupils in state schools and with adults as a teacher trainer. She wrote music, arrangements and lyrics of the teaching materials "Amuse-Bouches", a collection of eurhythmics for little children and their teachers. She is a member of the Collège of the *Institut Jaques-Dalcroze* since 2003. In 2013, Christine graduated with a MA from the Faculty of Science of Education, *Geneva University*. Since then, she has been working to relate Dalcroze pedagogy to scientific perspectives. At the same time, she is active as a musician in the vocal field, as a chorister and choir director.

This article offers a journey in the form of an investigation, which will take the reader across the boundaries separating the educational and scientific worlds. The object of this investigation is a quote from Dalcroze, referring to a “sixth sense” which would be “that of movement”. Going beyond the simple catchy formula is important, since this is the foundation of eurhythmics, from which stem several important focal points for its practice. This investigation will take us across some borders and will lead us into less familiar territories. And yet the facts and concepts we will discover will always be linked to the practice of eurhythmics. We are sure that the knowledge of appropriate and current terms contributes to the solidity of eurhythmics, allowing it to argue its unique educational approach. As we know, the more we are aware of what constitutes its identity, the better we can open up to others and evolve without the risk of getting lost.

Cet article propose un voyage sous forme d'enquête, qui fera franchir au lecteur les frontières séparant les mondes pédagogique, artistique et scientifique. L'objet de cette enquête est une citation de Dalcroze qui parle d'un «sixième sens» qui serait «celui du mouvement». Dépasser la simple formule accrocheuse est important, puisqu'on trouve là l'un des fondements de la rythmique, dont découlent plusieurs points d'attention importants pour sa pratique. Cette enquête nous fera franchir quelques frontières et nous amènera sur des terrains moins familiers. Pourtant, les faits et concepts que nous y découvrirons seront toujours rattachés à la pratique de la rythmique. Nous parions que la connaissance des termes adéquats et actuels contribue à la solidité de la rythmique, en permettant d'argumenter son approche pédagogique précieuse. Car, on le sait, plus on est conscient ce qui constitue son identité, mieux on peut s'ouvrir aux autres et évoluer sans risque de se perdre.

The French version of this article can be found on www.fier.com → documents → publications → articles.

Introduction

In 1920, Dalcroze wrote: “Movement is a muscular experience and this experience is appreciated by a sixth sense which is the muscular sense.” (Suquet, 2006, p. 411). We do like to quote our dear Emile Jaques-Dalcroze, but just the same: these terms seem a bit strange nowadays, out-dated, ... and not very scientific, right? What part of this statement is true? And, above all, what can this statement tell us that is still considered relevant to the profession of rhythmicians today? We understand it correctly: there is in there something that relates to the heart or eurhythmics and its functioning.

This article offers a small investigation into this sentence. We will look at the way it could be phrased nowadays, and focus on the parts that remain applicable in today's eurhythmics. It is a question of its foundations, as well as important focal points relevant for its practice.

In order to make interesting discoveries, we will have to accept crossing some borders and entering less familiar territories, such as certain scientific worlds.

It is not easy crossing certain borders! The foreign world on the other side can be scary. Its complicated language, its strange customs, its unknown culture... in order to really open up to all this strangeness, without “getting lost” on the way, it is required to be well anchored in one's own identity. The more one is aware of what it constitutes, the better one can open up, listen, discover the other, discuss differences... if this is true for individuals in their travels, it is also accurate for disciplines and the links between them. Eurhythmics, our young discipline, is no exception to this rule.

Going beyond the borders to see what can be collected to describe what constitutes the heart, the specificity of eurhythmics, seems to reinforce our practices and our ways of arguing them. Throughout this investigation, the clues guiding us will be the terms Dalcroze mentions in his quote: *movement*, *muscle*, and *sense*.

Senses and trends

Working as a teacher trainer in one of the Hautes Écoles de Pédagogie in Switzerland enables me to gain awareness of multiple educational proposals outside our discipline. Even in some promising approaches, I hear a lot about the “fifth sense”, which would be the one magic formula to make any teaching programme more interesting.

This movement has very little mention, even if it appears regularly in “mainstream” newspapers or media displaying images of pupils moving. Some try out activities in an open space without tables or chairs (gym, outdoor, ...). Unfortunately, all too often, we realise that there is not much awareness of this approach: the arguments to explain the added value of this recourse to movement are not present. At times, we could even suspect that this is a trendy idea, which can be advantageous to “sell”, to get across proposals to the general public that could otherwise be off-putting (such as digital coding for very young pupils for example). The unpleasant impression emerging is that the recourse to movement is used in this case as an advantageous and slightly magical layer of a so-called “ludic” activity. Besides, the term “ludic” is usually often associated with these famous “five senses”.

So, why five? In his book “The Brain’s Sense of Movement”, Berthoz (1997) specifies that it is Aristotle, Ancient Greece’s great philosopher and scholar, who seems to be the first to have put forward the idea of those five senses.

Naturally, the formula evoking the idea of a “sixth sense” is pleasing and has been used profusely. On the web, searching for websites associated with the term sixth sense results in two main groups of meaning. On one side, we find what relates to instinct or intuition, sometimes going as far as spiritual approaches or paranormal abilities (as seen in Night Shyamalan’s film with that title). On the other side (and this part will be the focus of this article), various sensory systems are mentioned, bearing little known terms like thermoception, nociception, equilibrioception, ...

But what is a sense?

Beyond the daily and intuitive use of this term, it becomes clear that if we want a definition, we enter scientific considerations (in particular neuropsychological), which are not only extremely complex, but also constantly readjusted by new scientific discoveries. We will evidently not reach this degree of explanation.

To simplify matters, it will be said that the job of a sensory receptor is to inform the central nervous system, in order to allow perception to do its analytical, judgmental and anticipatory work in regard to upcoming decisions and actions. There are various receptors, which can be connected to different sensorialities. There is nothing surprising in the fact that collective consciousness is easily satisfied by the well known “five senses”, as the five senses’ receptors are easily recognised, such as eye and ear. However, there are various other sensory modalities, each allowing to perceive a part of reality, whether external or internal.

We can indeed, as of now, state that there are more than six senses, and there are actually a high number of different classifications of these various sensory modalities. Rigal’s classification (1996) advantageously offers clarity as it describes three broad categories of sensibilities, classified according to the sensory receptors informing them. These are exteroceptive, proprioceptive and interoceptive sensitivities.

- The *five senses* belong to the first category, exteroceptive, as those receptors inform our organism on an external arrival: through eyes, ears, taste buds, (etc.). In this case, it refers to sight, sound, touch, smell, and taste.
- Receptors located in internal organs were also discovered. Those very recent scientific breakthroughs are yet to be stabilised (especially in relation to eurhythmics), the *interoceptive sensitivity* will for now only be added to the list.

- The ear is a complex organ; it is not only involved in hearing, but also in the functioning of a system controlling the *vestibular function*. Through receptors situated in the inner ear, head movements are detected, providing the nervous system with data required for balance and posture, amongst others. This is the *vestibular sense*, also referred to as *labyrinthine sense*.

This *vestibular sense* is one of the senses constituting *proprioceptive sensibility*, the other being the *kinesthetic sense*. The receptors informing the latter are situated in various locations: tendons, articulations, and *muscles*. This is it!

Even if “muscular sense” is no longer used, muscles are well and truly involved in this sensory modality, often mentioned in sport sciences under the name *proprioception*. According to Suquet (2006), proprioception is “the territory of conscious and unconscious mobility in the human body” (p. 412).

From movement to cognition

The various sensory data are analysed and processed through different systems contributing to perception. If sensory information is detected, recognised, discriminated, it can lead to a potential learning as memory is thus involved. From there, it can be processed, identified, notably in a verbal (words) or graphic form: drawn symbols, diagrams, etc.

It also adheres to Dalcroze’s intuitions as this perceptive treatment leads to cognitive tools. The reunion between body and mind, important to Dalcroze, is thus achieved. The perception phenomenon, leading to cognition, brings us to cross a new border, entering a more pedagogical territory. Starting a learning process through sensory explorations, then paying the necessary care and attention to bring out the characteristics and analysis of the taught object from this experience. The Dalcrozian approach can be recognised here.

What is the aim of knowing all of this?

When one is a “simple eurhythmics practitioner”, what is the aim of having terms for all of these phenomena? For us teachers, knowing those phenomena a bit better allows us to deepen our knowledge and, above all, enlarge the vision of what is happening with the students when they struggle to perform what is asked of them.

In my practice as a rhythmician (in particular with younger children aged 4 to 6), I have had the chance to observe a wide range of movements in my students, from the most spontaneous to the most sophisticated, sometimes clumsy and sometimes expert, often completely unconscious. The challenge for the teacher is to make each pupil aware and have a better understanding of their own actions, to gain ease and freedom.

My own awareness has long been very partial in regards to the reason for some of my pupils’ actions. Let’s take the example of the following movements, very present and spontaneous in young pupils: rotating on their own body, swinging, or even throwing themselves on the floor! Those movements are very frequent but neglected by the majority of teachers, probably due to the fact that they are considered awkward and irrelevant.

And yet, their recurrence indicates that it is a phenomenon that needs to be taken into account in these young children. This is confirmed by Colette Catteau (2011), a physical education teacher in French “preschool level”. She suggests that it is a way for the child to provoke sensations, for the pleasure of feeling alive and excited, and sometimes even aiming at scaring themselves a little (am I going to fall or not?) all the whilst knowing that the fall would be without unfortunate consequences. Above all, Catteau points out that those movements all have in common allowing the activation of receptors located in the inner ear. It does indeed involve the vestibular sense, described above.

For my part, knowing the relevance of those movements for the pupils allowed me to welcome and incorporate them in the proposed actions. Above all, it led me to a better understanding of those young children's needs. They live in a physiological and psychological reality that is so different from mine. We need to remember that one of the most delicate – and impassable – borders encountered in teaching, is the one that separates young children from adults. Even with all the goodwill in the world, it would be dangerous to neglect the fact that a young child thinks differently, perceives differently,¹ grows and progresses differently, their hormonal world is different and their tonus is different from that of the adult (as will be discussed later).

In order to fill this gap, this fundamental and universal “amnesia”, we can only humbly rely on the knowledge built progressively by the disciplines and in particular, scientific disciplines. It is moreover only very late (on a historical scale) that the disciplines started taking an interest in these younger subjects and describing their particularities.

Exempting oneself from this knowledge on young children puts them at risk of blunders from our part... we will come back to this.

Coming back to those not always welcome falls and rotations, understanding them better allows us to deal with them more efficiently. Why not consider them as a new learning object: how could we jump in different ways? Or insert them in upcoming activity propositions: can you invent a dance starting with a jump? It is also possible to simply find interest in this observation, which indicates the tonic state of the pupil at that time and gives clues as to where “their mind really is”. Perhaps this will lead to finding out the reason that is preventing them from paying attention in class. Following the clues of our investigation (muscles, movement sense) leads us to a concept which has not been named yet: tonus. To approach this term, let's pass a new border, easy to cross as this field shares a significant amount of common interest with our own discipline: it is the domain of psychomotricity.

Tonus regulation: an important focal point for our profession

De Lièvre and Staes (2000) point out “tonus is a state of light, permanent, and unintentional tension of striated muscles. It ensures holding a position and varies according to received information thanks to the kinesthetic sense, it can also vary according to emotional experience” (p. 32).

The tension and relaxation of music, the impulses and brakes worked on in eurhythmics, those tonic variations are at the heart of our work. Now, this is rather related to “contractile tonus”, on which we try to have a more conscious and effective hold. The “basal tonus” is however also constantly present, night and day. Robert-Ouvray states: “since birth until the end of our life, tone is our barometer and our psycho-corporal identity card.” (1996, p. 40).

When eurhythmics is performed with children however, it is crucial to remember that tone varies greatly throughout life. Wauters-Krings (2009), psychomotor education specialist for young children, specifies that hypertonicity is prevalent in early life. Acquiring motricity's full range of possibilities can take years. This is particularly the case for precision and speed (and therefore the exactitude of execution, when thinking about movements associated with music).

It would be dangerous for our students if we, teachers, forgot the fact that in regard to tonus, a stable and mature state is reached around 9 years old. Let me highlight this: *only* at nine years old! Admittedly, neuromotor maturation is unequal amongst students, but there is a high risk, for the less mature student on a neuromotor plan, of discouraging them with complex instructions or with constraining requirements.

¹ The description of a very young child's particular perception mode, described notably by Stern (1985), deserves an entire article. We shall limit ourselves to quote Gratier (2007), who states that the infant is capable since birth to develop their first communication “in an intersensorial way” (p.71), using variations of tonic and sensory intensity for the benefit of a first form of communication. “The expressed and shared emotions in communicative encounters between the baby and their family are primarily experienced as temporal qualities involving the entire body and all the sensory channels” (p. 71).

Although a child starts to exercise tonic control over their movements from the age of four (particularly with regard to precision and speed), their performances at that level remain “conditioned by the ability to brake” (ibid, p.40). It therefore concerns in particular the function of break, of movement inhibition, as it is only at the age of nine (and thus after at least four years of schooling, in most school systems) that “the child can voluntarily inhibit (release) muscular tension” (ibid, p. 40).

We find here the strength of Dalcroze’s intuitions: exercising breaks and impulses is evidently an excellent idea, an excellent way to make a child aware of their own strengths and limitations, and allowing them to discover strategies... However, it is apparent that this really needs to be done with the greatest respect for the limits of maturation, with which we must negotiate the requirements of requested performances.

Which scientific sources around Dalcroze?

In the course of these pages, we begin to realise that, contrary to our first impression, the terms used by Dalcroze are related to scientific realities which was beginning to take shape at this time.

In a chapter on the “History of the body”, Suquet (2006) reports that “with the turn of the nineteenth century a new conscience of an intra-corporal space, animated by a diversity of neurological, organic, emotional rhythms, starts to surface” (Suquet, pp. 410-411). Indeed, in the famous Salpêtrière Hospital in Paris, they deal with “psychophysics”, they look at “psychomotor inductions’ phenomena” (ibid. p. 411), which makes it possible to highlight the dynamic aspects of “motor discharges” (Féré, 1887, quoted by Suquet p. 517), which demonstrated effects «as much on the level of muscular tone as on the level of respiration and the cardiovascular system. Perception and mobility are thus intimately linked”. (ibid. p. 411).

This idea was echoed when Dalcroze wrote in 1920 that “the possibility of movement has its source in a continuous exchange of psychic effluences and sensory repercussions” (ibid. p. 411).

It was around the same time that a new field of scientific research was emerging: neuropsychology, which (as previously discussed) is continuously providing invaluable discoveries for the knowledge of the human being. One of its “founding fathers”, Sherrington, was the first (as early as 1906) to talk about “proprioception”, a sensory mode that we have already encountered in these pages. However, it cannot be said with certainty that Dalcroze consciously made the connection with this emerging field. The formula “muscular sense” seems to have another source, as proposed by Schroedter (2022).²

This being the case, it is now up to us to deepen and update the scientific foundations of these Dalcrozian proposals.

What do we keep from this quote?

- In today’s science, there is a clear consensus that *five senses* are *not enough* to describe the scope and complexity of perception. Goodbye then Aristotle, and many thanks all the same! In order to progress in our discoveries and to respect the full complexity of learning situations in eurhythmics, we must indeed cross the border separating your time from ours.
- We can state that currently, neurosciences agree to declare that a “*sense of movement*” indeed exists, now referred to as “*kinesthetic sense*”.

2 In her article «The Mind is a Muscle—or: the Muscle is a Mind?», Schroedter looks for the historical origins of the terms used by Dalcroze ([muscular sense], [innervation sensations]). It states (p. 9) that the work of Sheets-Johnstone and Eckart Scheerer probably allows the term [kinesthesia] to be attributed to the writer and philosopher Johann Jacob Engel at the end of the 18th century.

- Some *muscles* are indeed involved in this sensoriality, even if it is no longer referred to as “muscular sense”. Muscles also take part in the *tonus* and its *regulation*, which is so important in the practice of eurhythmics.
- Tonus and its variations are the very essence of a baby’s *first communication*, which is similar to a *form of musicality*.

In the course of these explorations, it is amusing to note that the formula “sixth sense” was mentioned twice: once in the words of a doctor interviewed by a weekly mainstream magazine, with regards to the vestibular sense (Raimondi, 2017). The other is the very title of a chapter of the book already mentioned (and browsed through many times: I clearly forgot about it!): Berthoz (1997) indeed titles his second chapter “The Sense of Movement: A Sixth Sense?” A formulation very close to Dalcroze’s, nevertheless the question mark should be noted as it demonstrates scientific carefulness!

Conclusion

At the root of our investigation, Dalcroze’s quote led us to cross a few borders in order to enter territories which are not often as frequented. With these somewhat out-dated terms, we have also sometimes looked over the borders of time, making us think a priori, that the scientific world in which eurhythmics is born was very different from ours. On the contrary, after this journey, we realise the extent to which the essential elements were already present. This observation seems to show the slow progress of scientific research... But it also highlights the fact that if the hypotheses are correct, they surely progress.

By following the thread of ideas carried by this quote, we have seen that the crossing of borders is possible and even fruitful. Overcoming fear and judgment about each other’s practices, knowing each other better, also involves observing common phenomena. Whatever one may say, this also concerns the borders separating artistic practice, scientific research, and educational practice.

Using the right terms, sharing them, relying on established and solid scientific facts, on sharp observations, all this allows us to argue with relevance the interest of eurhythmics, notably to promote it as valuable approach in schools. This is also the way to contribute to the durability of eurhythmics.

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Why Not?

Dancing across borders in a wheelchair

Marlies Muijzers



© Marleen Wijnen

Marlies Muijzers is a private cello teacher based in Eindhoven, The Netherlands. Her background includes bachelor degrees in teaching cello (classical and improvisation) and social studies. She performed in several ensembles until a debilitating illness forced her to stop playing cello and she began to use a wheelchair. Nevertheless, Marlies completed her study for the Professional Certificate in Dalcroze Eurhythmics (Dalcroze United Kingdom). In addition, she attended numerous other Dalcroze courses in England, Italy and Switzerland. Marlies's music teaching included Music and Movement workshops for string players and teachers, for people with Alzheimer's disease and for primary school children. Currently, she is developing a movement workshop on resilience.

In 2016 a professional cellist and Dalcroze teacher was affected by a progressive and painful disease of the small nerves, which forced her to use a wheelchair and to give up playing the cello. Instead of throwing in the towel, she started writing and exploring her physical potentials for musical expression by modern dance in a wheelchair. Out of her poem "The sound of my ability" she created a solo dance performance using the recorded music of a cello solo played by herself before the illness. The processes of acceptance and creating the choreography are explained by five phases: wondering about the new situation, exploring out of the comfort zone, permitting the feeling, crossing borders and bearing mind and body. "Why not?" has been the constant question to integrate Dalcroze Eurhythmics and to enter each next phase. One crosses the borders of possibilities by just doing it. Resilience needs movement.

En 2016, une violoncelliste professionnelle et professeur de rythmique Dalcroze a été touchée par une maladie progressive et douloureuse des petits nerfs, qui l'a obligée à utiliser un fauteuil roulant et à renoncer à jouer du violoncelle. Au lieu de jeter l'éponge, elle a commencé à écrire et à explorer ses potentiels physiques d'expression musicale par la danse moderne en fauteuil roulant. À partir de son poème «The sound of my ability», elle a créé un spectacle de danse solo en utilisant la musique enregistrée d'un solo de violoncelle joué par elle-même avant sa maladie. Les processus d'acceptation et de création de la chorégraphie sont expliqués par cinq phases : s'interroger sur la nouvelle situation, explorer hors de la zone de confort, permettre le sentiment, franchir les frontières et supporter l'esprit et le corps. « Pourquoi pas ? » a été la question constante pour intégrer la rythmique Dalcroze et entrer dans chaque phase suivante. On franchit les frontières des possibilités en le faisant tout simplement. La résilience a besoin de mouvement.



Videostill M. Muijzers, *De klank van mijn vermogen / The sound of my ability* (videographer Enero Moestalam)
© Marlies Muijzers

Introduction

During the final stage of my study for Professional Dalcroze Certificate in 2016, I was diagnosed with a progressive illness of the peripheral nerves called small fibre neuropathy, which led to extremely painful hands and feet during day and night. Pain is provoked by even the slightest touch on the skin of my fingers and feet. Within a year I was using a wheelchair. I was forced to stop playing the cello, but I continued with teaching the cello.

This paper tells the process how this physical limitation led to the creation of a solo dance performance (Muijzers, 2022, see QR code below), based on my poem, using the music of my cello solo recorded before my illness. The process is divided into an acceptance and a dance process. Both are subdivided in five phases: wondering (1), exploring (2), permitting (3), crossing borders (4) and bearing (5). The main source are personal logbooks, which were kept since the start of my disease to survive my ways of growing into new areas. In the transition from one phase to another, the question “Why not?” has been the recurring trigger to many follow-up steps in my professional life as a cellist, cello teacher and Dalcroze teacher.

Part One: Acceptance Process

Wondering

Writing reflections, poems and drawing became a way of creating awareness of my painful situation. It showed me who I was and what was happening. My logbook reflected: “It feels like surfing on wild waves, I keep falling. To enter the wave is the hardest part, I have to start very small on a safe spot, keep focused and move along.” Time and silence helped me to incorporate a strange sense of loneliness, absorbing the first shock, fear and grief. For a long time it confused me: “I am in the wrong movie, this is not me, this is someone else”. My mindset changed gradually into: “Let’s make the best of it”, starting to upgrade my physical skills in a wheelchair to establish the new, hard-to-achieve body balance on wheels. Surprisingly my wheelchair became my friend and happened to be the least problem by relieving my pain and maintaining my independence.



M. Muijzers: drawing painful feet

Exploring

The next reaction to my illness was a desire to intensify my movements. I started to practise Tai Chi, Qi Gong and Tai Chi Dance in easy daily patterns. Being a Dalcroze student at that time, it enriched my movement vocabulary and triggered me to explore modern dance: “Why not?” During the COVID-19 restrictions I joined an online dance class and later on

I had individual sessions with a dance coach monthly to create a choreography based on my poem. All my previous and new movement experiences, twenty years of cello teaching included, created a renewed awareness of my posture. Width, length and centre became the base to build up my movements in the wheelchair. Because I could no longer use my hands and feet in a normal way, my trunk became more important and needed to compensate for the missing movements. My observation skills had to be improved to feel the start of a movement, which resulted in more grounded and organic movements.

When things were difficult to do, I needed to explore in smaller steps and at a slower tempo to create space for a handhold in between the steps: the smaller the step, the more specific the detail, the more awareness, the more profound the development. As a cello teacher I have become a specialist in creating intermediate steps and separating tasks to help students reach a goal. Like a cello student I was now finding my own way of growing, using the importance of small steps, perseverance and details. Making these new habits visible, attractive, easy and satisfying was helpful. A small detail could make the difference, as a big success starts with one little step and depends on the ability to recover quickly after wrong steps (Clear, 2018).

Permitting

For me this phase was the toughest one. How to deal with extreme nerve pain 24/7? In essence, my curious, creative, energetic, extrovert and positive character wanted to solve a problem and liked to structure it. That helped. But I needed to strengthen my psychological flexibility. Acceptance and Commitment Therapy guided me very effectively to handle my resistance, anger and grief (Harris, 2012). I learned accepting and commitment techniques, which were not difficult to apply at all, such as defusion, expansion and affirmation. Defusion means: make contact with the pain and then park it or let it pass for the moment, knowing it will come back. Expanding means: make contact with the pain and make it bigger, resulting in movement of the pain. Affirmation means: make contact with yourself with something that makes you happy and do it. All these strategies did not reduce the pain, but resulted in permitting the situation to exist. I have learned that I am not my pain. I was and still am the same person as before my illness and this provides me with a strong sense of safety and perspective.

To focus and to stay in the present, applying 'the Circles of Attention' (Schuijers, 2018), became another welcome tool to create a reliable spot where I can stay and evolve from. Less looking back or ahead resulted in fewer worries and frustrations. Listening to the expression of the body itself and to dialogue with it became an inspiring journey. One example is the belly that, as an independent messenger, sends out messages that demand my response. As Koss et al. (1998) write: "The belly is a very old and primitive instrument: it cannot be directed or tamed. It cannot be persuaded to keep silent. It just exists" (p. 37). Nature too became a source of inspiration. The power of its beauty, its roughness, its sounds and silence, its movements, brought me closer to myself.

Crossing Borders

Teaching the cello, without playing yourself? Creating movement workshops, being in a wheelchair? It all turned out to be possible. My teaching has changed for the better: I optimised different ways to observe, analyse, instruct, sing, conduct and move, all supported by Dalcroizian input.

I asked myself: why not join the Dalcroze UK Summer School in a wheelchair? The first rhythmic class in the wheelchair was impressive. I could easily find my way in the group. The necessity to sit while moving pushed my physical boundaries: I noticed that I was able to express the pulse of the music by using my sit bones and trunk to 'walk in my wheelchair'.

Supported by the contact surface of four wheels this formed a big stable mass, which needed much more space, energy and time to move. The preparation of the movement became crucial, my Dalcrozian anacrusis skills had to be upgraded. One year later I could join with confidence the Italian Dalcroze Summer School. The openness and support of both summer schools contributed to my ability to cross the border of my assumptions: I could continue with Dalcroze Eurhythmics, in fact I could benefit from it.



Rhythmics class at Dalcroze Summerschool UK, 2018 © Jacqueline Vann



Group session at Dalcroze Summerschool UK, 2018 © Bethan Habron-James

My choreography is part of a collaborative autoethnography with John Habron-James, who invited me to reflect creatively about my situation (Muijzers & Habron-James, in preparation). Research was new to me and elevated my energy, reflections and creativity (Muijzers & Habron, 2021). It has been the trigger to investigate my possibilities even more. Without this challenging research this dance would not exist.

Bearing

I could learn to accept, to steer clear of the victim role by asking myself liberating questions: “What do you want? Who wants this? What will you do about it? When?” (Eger, 2018, p. 285). It confirmed to me that I always have a choice and I am free to use it, starting with the smallest and easiest step. Dancing was a conscious choice, to face my body, to meet the (im)possibilities, to let go of the control and to embrace all the feelings inside me. Step by step, by trial and error, I discovered my path of resilience. Gradually I started to understand my ‘manual’, to rely on myself and my creative skills. To wonder and observe remained my mantra. Unfortunately, I could not influence my physical problems, but thankfully I could influence my mind, which put me in charge of my quality of life again. Above all, bearing my situation relied on my positive mindset and perseverance, as my late mother always told me: “When a wind of change appears, some build windshields, others build windmills.”

Part Two: Dance Process

Wondering

To translate my poem “The sound of my ability” into movement, I needed to define the main subjects: pain (physically) and acceptance (mentally). An inventory of the available parts of my restricted body and the specific characteristics of the wheelchair was made into dance. Possibilities and impossibilities came along, including wondering which music would be fitting for the message of the choreography: it is possible to live with pain. Modern dance brought new technical input to my movement vocabulary, such as Laban method, dynamic centre, swing, fall and contraction (Diehl & Lampert, 2011). I found inspiration in many choreographers (Cherkaoui, 2017; Hofesh Shechter Company, 2016; van Manen, 2012).

Exploring

Three phases of acceptance were abstracted for structuring the choreography: crisis, surrender and recovery. I searched for a maximum of five movements to be the motives in my dance. Meanwhile, a debilitating dizziness was added to my existing physical problems, and I had to keep my head still for some months. However, this intense setback created unexpected possibilities. My playground opened up and my wheelchair being my ‘dancing outfit’ became an object of observation. Its shape and manoeuvrability could be explored much more, to be united as one: we together, instead of just me moving in a wheelchair. My trusted imagination of the sound extended into the imagination of the movement. I discovered joyfully that I could continue to ‘play the cello’, to be able to stay very close to my musical heart, to continue with composing with the body. As I wrote in my personal dance journal: “When dancing I only need to be the cellist”.

Permitting

To allow myself to dance purely by feeling instead of by devising, was a crucial improvement in the dance process. I also intensified the frequency of dancing by inventing a very effective 3 x 3 minutes method: dancing three times to one random piece of music every day. This

evoked surprising outcomes, each time. The required openness enabled me to listen very precisely with my challenging body to connect with the sound. This simple method remains my warm-up, as it is easy to integrate spontaneously in any daily schedule.

A new physical restriction, caused by a tennis elbow, invited the smallest parts of my trunk to move along. I needed to start using my acquired ability to observe the feeling within my body, instead of inventing it. Only permitting what was available was a very welcome insight. Expansion was not only a helpful tool for coping with my pain, but also added growth to my dancing skills. Lying in a bath with my extremely limited body brought a new awareness of space. I could imagine 'extended floodplains' in which my pain and dizziness could reside. Focussing on the space, even the smallest part of my body was triggered to move and to connect easily with the music. While dancing, the composing musician in me was re-awakened, using unconscious musical components such as reduction, enlargement, reversal, mirror, contrast, tempi, timing, dynamics, energy, articulation and silence.

Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) therapy (Shapiro, 2017) was needed to finally accept saying goodbye to playing the cello. It liberated my musical expression to be welcomed into my dancing body.

Crossing Borders

After six months, the experiments in my dancing laboratory intensified. Inventing the 'moving with or without' concept for arms, mirror and brakes on the wheels resulted in new insights, such as isolated and suggested movements, the use of both watching (knowing) and feeling, and the differences of moving either in or with the wheelchair. Dancing to images of seeds and fruit from a photography book (Biss, 2021) optimised my 'listening body' to express extraordinary textures, shapes, and smallest details with my body. Combining image with body and voice led to new areas of musical and bodily expression.

The wheelchair forced me to upgrade my transitions skills, resulting in more intermediate steps and delayed movements that depended on more help from the rest of the body. Smaller details emerged that improved the expression of the dance. But it also required more muscle control, as movements had to be improved or substituted. Meeting physical difficulties forced me to create space for transitions that became an independent element and meaning in my choreography.

Bearing

Living in the moment, dealing with my body and using my creativity made me feel stronger and enabled growth in the dance process. By trusting my abilities, I let the development flow its own way, including all the obstacles that kept coming my way. A big breakthrough in my dance process was the discovery of my main theme: tangles and braids, as metaphors for my pain, restrictions, emotions and possibilities. My process had showed me that it is always possible to untie the tangle and create a braid of it. Being the young girl with braids again, I happily wrote in my logbook: "I am going to braid with my body!".

Choosing Mesra as my music happened organically, dancing to it by free improvisation. Why not choose this beautiful piece of music, which I had studied for so long, performed and recorded? Mesra means: a journey which starts in the night. It was composed especially for me, before my illness (Ağır, 2015). I wrote: "What a liberation. I dance. To Mesra."

being switched on. Especially, the physical rest and silence encouraged the dancing mind to continue creating. Being a musician, I could proceed easily by visualising. This created a useful distance from which to observe and helped me to honour the title and message of the choreography. I started to visualise in extreme slow motion, meeting every little detail. My cello teaching experiences helped me to program mentally the complex opposite movements by training them separately and assembling them later. The visualisation had intensified the progression of the choreography. In retrospect, this part of the project turned out to be the most effective of all.

Restarting to dance physically was made in very small and cautious steps, inviting the rest of my body to dance with a slowly moving head. Using the image of a rubber band connecting my head with the sky was very effective. It changed my movements positively and the choreography became more abstract, as I wished. I could return to the original recording plan with a new insight: I would adapt the choreography to any physical situation. Rehearsing in the space of a big gym and a local park was a warm welcome after six weeks of visualisation, which optimised my expression and flow by refining dynamics and articulations. I could invite the musician in me to dance, to express the freedom of creating sounds, the unexpected, the roughness, the extremity, the purity. This allowed me to trust the automatised script to improvise on the music again, back to my favourite base, only by letting it in. Once I mastered the choreography, I could instantly add a new expression. I wrote: "This is the way I want to dance". On the day of recording, all my musical luggage, such as preparation, focus, imagination, trust, relaxation, improvisation and flow could be joined. The old church added an extra energy: the space, the lines and the resemblance with the special location, where I once had recorded Mesra on cello, made it magical. During the whole session I was able to create my own lines and expression, from my old safe haven, I was the cellist.



Videostill M. Muijzers: *De klank van mijn vermogen / The sound of my ability* (videographer Enero Moestalam)
© Marlies Muijzers

Throughout this 18-month project the wonderful collaboration with my dance coach, Anneloes van Schuppen, was a solid base to enter the world of modern dance with my possibilities. To communicate with her in between sessions, sharing my personal dance logbook, was very effective. Being unfamiliar with dance education was helpful to follow my own path. My strengths were trusting my skills in music and improvisation, but I needed her knowledge, confirmation and advice to deal with my perfectionism and insecurity. Anneloes reflected on this project:

To coach a musician and Dalcroze teacher has been an insightful journey. Marlies did not need to learn a new language, but only a new expression for her already acquired technics and vocabulary. The two art disciplines overlapped each other, as Marlies called out frequently while dancing: oh, it's just the same as in music! This way she could make big steps as a dancer and my work is enriched with a new interdisciplinary frame of reference. Together we explored all possibilities to dance full of expression.

Conclusion

This dance project led to many insights. The bigger the restriction, the bigger the need to explore and bear it, the bigger space is needed for it. Space can be created and dancing is always possible in any body, not depending on physical restrictions or wheelchair. Rather, it offered my creative potential a new perspective for musical expression, supported by the limitless applications and perspectives of Dalcroze Eurhythmics. My horizon has broadened by transcending my assumptions. The choreography helped me to discover the unexpected power of my vulnerability. I believe there is resilience deep inside all of us. One can learn to discover, to use and to increase it.

It felt like coming home, finally being able to present what was already left in stock in my body, after playing the cello for almost fifty years. The cello road had to be closed enabling the entry into dance. Comparing it with performing Mesra on cello, dancing offered me, by its three-dimensional perspective, endless possibilities to express the music by using more parts of the whole body. I do enormously miss playing the beautiful cello. But in everything I do in music education, Dalcroze Eurhythmics and modern dance, I am still the cellist. To work out my dreams, I just need more time, space and energy than before.

To meet new possibilities, I needed to cross borders. I needed movement. Dancing became my new safe haven, which enlarges my stock of resilience. I will keep asking myself constantly: "Why not?"

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Video 'De klank van mijn vermogen', choreography/dance: Marlies Muijzers:



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ExHN1uJFel4&t=7s>

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unfolding walking stories

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© Pavlos Iliopoulos

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In this article, I present the ways in which a Eurhythmics lesson with seniors crosses the borders of a conventional class and affects participants' everyday life by improving the movement of their bodies. The physical action of everyday movements belongs to the area of procedural memory. It can be characterised as a series of automatic movements and well-established habits. But habits also pose limitations; they keep following pre-formed paths that cannot be undone and reforged without some effort. This also inevitably leads to an age-related deterioration of the quality of movement, as the elderly seldom face new movement challenges. I present how seniors can increase perception of their bodies when performing their everyday rituals through taking part in a eurhythmics performance. Moving between pedagogical processes and philosophical perspectives, I focus on how a Eurhythmics class can cross the confines of a body's limitations and change the perception of the body in seniors, thus reforming and improving their everyday movements as well their body memory.

Dans cet article, je présente comment une leçon de rythmique avec des personnes âgées dépasse les frontières d'une classe conventionnelle et affecte la vie quotidienne des participants en améliorant les mouvements de leur corps. L'action physique des mouvements quotidiens appartient au domaine de la mémoire procédurale. Elle peut être caractérisée comme une série de mouvements automatiques et d'habitudes bien ancrées. Mais les habitudes posent aussi des limites ; elles suivent des chemins préformés qui ne peuvent être défaites et reforgés sans un certain effort. Cela conduit inévitablement à une détérioration de la qualité du mouvement liée à l'âge, car les personnes âgées sont rarement confrontées à de nouveaux défis en matière de mouvement. Je présente comment les personnes âgées peuvent améliorer la perception de leur corps lors de leurs rituels quotidiens en participant à une performance de rythmique. Passant des processus pédagogiques aux perspectives philosophiques, je me concentre sur la manière dont un cours de rythmique peut dépasser les limites du corps et changer la perception du corps chez les personnes âgées, réformant et améliorant ainsi leurs mouvements quotidiens ainsi que leur mémoire corporelle.

Introduction

Large room, older women sitting on chairs, quiet.

They are holding in their hands their favorite objects:

A silk scarf, a pair of earrings, a necklace, a Chinese porcelain rooster, a shell.

Why is this special to me?

Let me dance with you - when I dance, I feel young again.

Memories move the body, objects take on a different form, a different state.

Time and space are now the individuals; I am the object.

The group improvisation begins. The women are waiting for the music. The first sound of the prepared piano gives the signal and the women in motion imagine that they are dancing together with their memories and hearing the sounds of anamnesis.

Amores IV, John Cage.

Contrasts, moving or still images, exploration, variation, the object again determines space and time.

The time.

The prepared piano, a multi-media instrument that supports the polymorphism of associations sonically and rhythmically; object and body.

The music ends.

The women sit.

They are back.

In the present.¹

¹ Psyrra, V. (2019). Spot 5: Anamnesis. Bewegungsimprovisation mit Objekten in der Rhythmik-Praxis mit älteren Menschen. In: Steffen-Wittek, M./Weise, D./Zaiser, D. (Eds.), *Rhythmik - Musik und Bewegung* (p. 176). Bielefeld, Transcript Verlag

When I began working with seniors in eurhythmics classes, I wanted them to bring the memories of their own experiences into the exercises and the music and movement performances. There was always a place for them to express and share their knowledge. In other words, they could express their own past through movement, voice, and musical instruments. We used this material a lot of times and it seemed that they needed to share it. But after a while, I was curious to explore if the opposite was happening; if they could bring their experiences of our lessons into their everyday life. So, the question arose does this exceptional bodily experience affect their life and change the perception of their own body?

My first interest was to find and create didactic ways to transform functional movements into expressive movements. That was important because functional movements belong to the domain of procedural memory. They can be characterised as an automatic sequence of movements and a well-rehearsed habit (Fuchs, 2009, p. 2). I decided to work with this idea because a challenge was posed for seniors to change their habitual movements and bring to the forefront their pre-formulated physical actions, postures, and behaviours, and to consciously evoke their body memory. According to Thomas Fuchs (2011) body memory “changes a person’s corporeal and inter-corporeal experiences into implicitly effective predispositions, which provide the mostly unconscious basis for day-to-day living” (p. 73-74). Fuchs’ approach to body memory gives us a different perspective on every human’s past and how we can use it, as well as transform it. He describes body memory more like a collective past (Fuchs, 2017, p. 336), rather than a lived past:

Hence, one could say that body memory means my lived past. Moreover, in a sense this memory implies a collective past, for it is obviously shaped to a large extent by cultural practices, rituals, roles, and artifacts that the lived body adopts, or assimilates, from birth on (p. 336).

Having that in mind, the term body memory explains or, rather, describes the way that a lived or subjective body (Fuchs, 2017, p. 335) works and can interact with its environment. That was an intriguing approach for this exploration since it gave me the basis to devise embodied applications for the seniors’ class that mixed memory, emotions, and perceptions to bring out their embodiment. In the context of eurhythmics, this self-development and evolution already addresses body, mind, and emotion together (Bautz, 2021, p. 81) and aims at an embodied person-body which operates “as an ontological factor that transforms music and translates sound into movement (and vice versa), thus taming the parameters of space and time” (Psyrra, 2021, p. 52).

Such an attempt is highly demanding for the participants and is extra challenging for elderly people. It is imperative to take into account the limitations of the body, which experiences disturbances and whose habitual movements slowly deteriorate. Here, eurhythmics seeks support in the field of neuroscience (Greenhead, 2015, p. 21) as well as in the field of geriatrics. An important example is the studies of Kressig, who shows that Dalcroze Eurhythmics promotes perceptible physical improvement in elderly people. The results of his research show that the participants of eurhythmics classes significantly increased their gait safety by reducing their gait irregularity under dual-task and improving their balance (Schlögl & Kressig, 2012, p. 45). Further studies demonstrate the influence of eurhythmics on behaviour and emotions of senior participants: Treviño and Bermúdez (2016) based their method on the connection of the ‘state of flow’, as described by Csikszentmihalyi, and the level of enjoyment of physical activity according to the PACES scale by Kendzierski and DeCarlo (1991). Their study suggests that participants had an attitude of excitement, enjoyment, and positive expectation towards the intervention, as well as “a very positive experience throughout the intervention regardless of their real limitations of musical and physical abilities to perform the exercise” (Treviño & Bermúdez, 2016, p. 165).

Although these studies give a comprehensive picture of the effect that eurhythmics exercises on influencing the physical, mental, and emotional state of older people, they still do not answer the primary question, especially its second part: does the exceptional bodily

experience of eurhythmics change the perception of the participants' own body? And, if I had to consider this question from Fuchs's point of view, I would add one more query: How can a eurhythmics teacher compile memory-pieces for the collective past of a senior?

Bodily and habitual movement

Consequently, I decided to follow a phenomenological investigation into related areas such as the division of abstract and concrete movements by Maurice Merleau-Ponty as well as the sensory-kinetic experience offered by Maxine Sheets-Johnstone. Maurice Merleau-Ponty defines the body as the vehicle of being in the world. The meaning of *I have a body* signifies for him a person's ability to condition their experiences, to have a sense of themselves, and that they also have consciousness of the world through their body:

We have learned to again sense our bodies; we have discovered, beneath objective and detached knowledge of the body, this other knowledge that we have of it because it is always with us and because we are bodies. It will be necessary to similarly awaken the experience of the world such as it appears to us insofar as we are in the world through our bodies, and insofar as we perceive the world with our bodies. But by re-establishing contact with the body and with the world in this way, we will also rediscover ourselves, since, if one perceives with his body, the body is a natural myself and, as it were, the body is the subject of perception (Merleau-Ponty, 2012, p. 213).

However, Merleau-Ponty's point of view on the perception of the body does not necessarily mean that human beings are capable of seeing all the angles of the world (Moya, 2019, p. 203). That leads to the Husserlian way of thinking, that the corporal awareness *I am* through movement becomes *I can* (kinetic movement possibilities). Preparing the body for a world full of possibilities requires openness to familiarity. According to Merleau-Ponty, habits and habitual movements provide the body with a chance to understand the world. As already mentioned, the didactic interest was to find ways for the senior participants to intercept their habitual movements in order to transform them into expressive movements and, as a result, to rejuvenate them. For me, it was interesting to realise that for the process of habitual movements, concrete movements can be or have to be part of an abstract movement (and vice versa). Mooney (2011) provides this argument:

Concrete movements are not caught in fixed pathways. They can be incorporated into abstract or concrete-like movements—and change in the face of obstacles that make their practical situations context-strange—without destroying immediacy or the flow of activity. This only makes good sense if we recognise novel prefigurations of outcomes that involve more than learnt skills informed representationally. Such bodily anticipations of results have a character of their own that informs new movements and movements already in train to keep them efficacious. But it is important to establish that this is backed up by an explication of the uncommon factor in these projections (p. 371).

That was an important point to understand in order to prepare the procedure of the lessons: the steps of the exercises to perform and the elements, which the seniors could use to change their body perception. The other phenomenologically challenging approach that I followed was Sheets-Johnstone's "make the familiar strange". Sheets-Johnstone explains (1999):

Calling attention to ourselves in movement in this way we have the possibility of discovering what is invariantly there in any felt experience of movement. This is because whatever the habitual movement, it now feels strange, even uncomfortable. Just such oddness jars us into an awareness of what we qualitatively marginalise in our habitual ways of doing things. By making the familiar strange, we familiarise ourselves anew with the familiar (p. 123).

Habits are sets of dynamic patterns that have become familiar. Familiar dynamics or familiar synergies of meaningful movements (Sheets-Johnstone, 2010) already contain an expressive character and their patterns create kinetic melodies. They form an infinite repertoire of cognitive and practical skills of the human body, which is “being constrained only by age, inclination – and pathology” (Sheets-Johnstone, 2012, p. 49). However, the ways we get to know our body and ourselves are limitless. The key for the senior participants to make the familiar strange and renew their habitual movements was to feel free to compose a new synthesis of kinetic melodies. The qualitative effective-kinetic dynamic of joy plays an important role in the realisation of this process. Eurhythmics classes give the space to inspire a free and joyful atmosphere and feeling, which can keep the freshness and the curiosity alive (Dalcroze, 1930, p. 83) for creative modes of expression of the participants through movement and music.²

Combining eurhythmics and body habits as well as its limitations with phenomenological approaches for the body, allowed me to create mechanisms where the senior participants could develop critical awareness and self-reflection. By encouraging a dialogue between seniors from different backgrounds as far as their physical and mental state is concerned and by enabling them to see beyond their habitual movements, I challenged them to expand the repertoire of their human experience. Therefore, the following hermeneutic approach to this subject focuses on how seniors can explore and expand their kinaesthetic knowledge and on what happens when they transfer this experience into everyday life.

Bodily experience, the way of eurhythmics

The framework of eurhythmics includes an intention to increase the body-mind connection and to offer various types of sensory artistic experiences. This framework’s heart is an integrated body that hears, feels, sees, moves, connects, and expresses (Psyrra, 2021, p. 55). The participants of a eurhythmics class are encouraged to explore the idea of the integrated body in different ways, using the aspects of space, time, force; to put it in Sheets-Johnstone’s terms, every movement created by the body is a *dynamic phenomenon in and of itself* (2014, p. 3) set in a complex of spatio-temporal-energetic structure. The exploration of an integrated body in combination with the corporal and emotional nature of music, helps the participants to develop themselves artistically, personally, and socially. In relation to the philosophy and methodologies of Dalcroze Eurhythmics, the awareness of bodily movement and its possibilities provides an innerly experienced perspective. Hence, working within a kinaesthetic content, the participants unconsciously allow the motor system to transform into a somatosensory system, which opens the possibility for transformation of the body’s perception. In the case of senior participants, this means not only understanding their body’s actions, but also increasing the ability to learn new skills. New skills mean new body memories.

In eurhythmics, contact with musical sounds can awaken the body’s sensations and modulate its habitual actions. For this article, the modulation of habitual motions can be interpreted as the transformation of a functional-habitual movement into an expressive–strange movement. This transformation is supported by the three music and movement aspects: music and movement in time, music and movement in space, and music and movement with force, as well as their combinations. This already provides a wide range of possible moves and movement qualities. Every functional–habitual movement can be introduced with different kinds of words, as well as descriptions. So, I tried to create a habitual-movement vocabulary, which combines the music and movement aspects with the style, posture, and purpose of a habitual movement. That helped the participants to experiment and improvise on their functional–habitual movements. For example, regarding

2 Jaques-Dalcroze, E. (1930). *Eurhythmics. Art And Education*. London, Chatto And Windus

walk, which can be characterised as such a functional-habitual movement. Some possible descriptions could be the following:³

| | Music and movement in space | Music and movement in time | Music and movement with force |
|---------|--|-----------------------------|---|
| Style | jumping, climbing, staggering, walking, galloping | speeding, sliding, swinging | running, wading, stomping, booting, leaping |
| Posture | limping, staggering, stilting, strutting, toddling, waddling | traipsing, plodding | sauntering, stumbling, shuffling |
| Purpose | strolling, promenading, roaming, wandering | dawdling, vagabonding | dashing, enjoying |

5 Steps to transform a functional movement into an expressive movement and back

“Think: the small amount of work required to discover the various mechanical contrivances at the disposal of the human body involves much investigation and a whole series of tasks of a different order” (Dalcroze, 1930, p. 10).⁴⁴ According to Thomas Fuchs, the body’s connections with each environment open a procedural field of possibilities, affordances, and probabilities (2017, p. 336). I wanted to prepare this field for the senior participants when I started to use this kind of habitual-movement vocabulary in the class. In order for the seniors to transform a habitual movement, such as the walk, into an expressive movement, I had to develop a series of steps for this process. Thinking on Merleau-Ponty’s argument that habits become part of the sensorimotor system of the body when concrete movements become habitual, the seniors had to feel free to perceive their bodies and their context. The next part was to have them use their bodies as an artistic form of expression and to “make the familiar strange”. In the end, the goal was to make those concrete movements abstract again. As a result, these are the five steps to transform a habitual movement into an expressive movement and back:

- a. Make a habitual movement
- b. Observe and reflect on the movement
- c. Improvise on the movement
- d. Concretise a new movement
- e. Internalise the new movement

Make a habitual movement

Everybody knows how to walk, how to balance, how to stand, and how to move in its own way and on its own conditions. All the possible habitual movements use procedural memory, which forms our collective past. Seniors move freely in the room, they relate with and react spontaneously to the space and the others, with the presence or absence of music. While these spontaneous movements alternate between concrete and abstract movements, abstract movements are those that will evoke their procedural memory and create a background of the body’s perception. Merleau-Ponty (2012) mentions that “every movement has a background, and that the movement and its background are moments

3 Most of those words I borrow from “Die Kunst des Gehens - Ästhetik des Gehens” by Paolo Bianchi (p. 50). This interesting essay attempts to present philosophical aspects of walking by presenting some examples from different artists. Bianchi also explores the roots of the German word for walking, *gehen*.

4 Jaques-Dalcroze, E. (1930). *Eurhythmics Art and Education*. London, Chatto and Windus

of a single whole” (p. 113). Hence, making a habitual movement means that the body is placed “within the possible or within non-being” (Merleau-Ponty, 2012, p. 114) and the “function of projection” is made possible (Merleau-Ponty, 2012, p. 114). This opens the field of movement possibilities and helps the participants to transform their body schema.

Observe and reflect on the movement

Dalcroze based his method on observing the body and its tendency to react to music through movement. Seniors are invited to observe their movements and reflect verbally on how they move through/in space or at a place. At this moment the seniors activate the function of projection “by which the subject of movement organises before himself a free space in which things that do not exist naturally can take on a semblance of existence” (Merleau-Ponty, 2012, p. 114). Now they can see, they can imagine, they can describe the way they move. That will “invert the natural relation between their bodies and the surroundings” (Merleau-Ponty, 2012, p. 115), and it will present ‘their productivity through the thickness of their being’ (2012, p. 115). It should be noted that during this step the participants have the opportunity not only to analyse their habitual bodily and spatial practices but also to understand how the public corporal rules influence their gestures and postures. This step can be characterised as a personal investigation and individual journey to bodily awareness.

Improvise on the movement

The integrated character of eurhythmics becomes visible (as well as audible) in the context of improvisation, which provides the ability of spontaneous expression, promotes the body-mind exploration of music and movement practices, and develops the “intellectual quickening that consists of the faculty of benefiting by experience” (Dalcroze, 1930, p. 99). As an embodied experience, improvisation encourages the participants to develop bodily attunement, a state of oneness with the body, as well as with the mind (Katan, 2016, p. 91). In the beginning, the senior participants are guided to improvise with habitual movements and with different parts of their bodies, with or without music. They are motivated into using various interpretations of one habitual movement and at this point, they refer to their habitual-movement vocabulary. They have to pick a different word/movement every time, which is connected with the original habitual one, or create a combination thereof, resulting in expressive movements. At first, the new movements feel strange, but as Sheets-Johnstone (2011) mentions “calling attention to ourselves in movement in this way, we have the possibility of discovering what is invariantly there in any felt experience of movement” (p.123). This strange feeling of making the unusual extends the possibilities for knowledge in many ways and shows “the meaning and value it does for us in the natural attitude” (Sheets-Johnstone, 2011, p. 164). In other words, the opportunity to improvise with the wide range of one or more habitual movements rewrites the rules on how we perceive our bodies.

Concretise a new movement

By exploring the different aspects of their body movement and the different interpretations of their movements, seniors come into contact with their potential movement performances. The resulting progress in consciousness and body control positively affects their sense of body limits, as well as their body memory. The body *has experienced* and that means that the body is now *aware*. Thus, the next step is for this implicit knowledge to become explicit through concretizing expressive intercorporeal experiences and shared intercorporeality. As the seniors gain familiarity with those expressive movements, this is reflected in their muscles, in their nervous system, and in their sensations. This is what Katan (2016) describes as the peak of exertion (p. 87). That is the moment when the participants’ conscientious

kinaesthetic exploration reaches “their most massive sensations”, and they feel the ‘freedom of movement’ (Katan, 2016, p. 87).

Internalise the new movement

Dalcroze was to the point when he wrote that there are many factors in our life of movement that act cooperatively (Dalcroze, 1930, p. 11). This intercorporeal cooperation is placed within the framework of the new memories’ collection and becomes knowledge, which can no longer be separated from the body. To internalise the new movements means that those have found their place within the concept of habitus (Fuchs, 2017, p. 334). The embodied knowledge of the transformed movements is internalised within the everyday movements and the inner naturalness and fluidity of the human movement. In considering all the above, we are led to observe that if habitus influences the schema of perception, changing aspects of habitus also changes body perception.

Conclusion

A couple of months after our last lesson, I met with the seniors and we had an interesting conversation about our lessons and eurhythmics. It was pleasant to hear that during our lessons they felt, as they said, the totality of their bodies, the harmony of their movements and that the music evoked their senses. But there is another comment that they made about how these practices influenced their lives after the lessons. They noticed that they used many movements during the day, which they had already tried during the lessons. One notable example was the way they were walking on the street. They observed that the posture, along with the attitude of walking, many times was different and that the difference felt natural. When those movements became aware, the seniors could instinctively perceive their habitual movement qualities and use these movements the way they wanted to. Sometimes, they said, they just needed a bit of thought to change or transform, for example, the narrative of their walking.

My intention with this article was to emphasise on the one hand that elderly bodies can still explore or, better, re-explore their body possibilities and overlook for a while its limitations and, on the other hand, that they can develop new movements, and those movements they can internalise and deploy in their everyday life. Seniors are encouraged to rediscover themselves and their ability to transform. Eurhythmics can be considered as a journey of transformation and improvement of seniors’ everyday movements, and the five steps I suggest here may well be a way to achieve this. Those steps could help seniors’ bodies to go beyond their perceived limits and help them to change their body perception. I developed the idea based on the phenomenological theories of Maurice Merleau-Ponty on abstract and concrete movement and Maxine Sheets-Johnstone’s “make the familiar strange” concept. Thomas Fuchs’s studies and theories about body memory helped me to understand embodied and implicit knowledge. This investigation has shown me that seniors can always transform a habitual movement into an expressive one and that they can make this movement automatic. Despite this process feeling strange, the eurhythmics experience has a positive influence on seniors, and helps them rediscover hidden, forgotten, or new abilities and learn how to trust them in order to make them part of their being.

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Rhythm in the Thinking and Practice of Rudolf Laban

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Dick McCaw began his career in professional theatre, co-founding The Actor's Touring Company in 1979 and The Medieval Players in 1981. He was Artistic Director of the International Workshop Festival from 1993 – 2001 after which he began a period of re-training, gaining a PhD in 2003, and qualifying as a Feldenkrais practitioner in 2004.

He became a staff member of Royal Holloway University of London in 2007, has edited three books (all on the work and legacy of Rudolf Laban), and authored three books, two on the Actor's Body, the other on Mikhail Bakhtin. He is a student and instructor of Wu Family Tai Chi.

For Fabian Bautz

Rhythm is not a subject, not a thing, but rather a predicate; it is a description of processes and patternings in time and space: a petrol engine ticking over, someone hurrying to the railway station, the way someone stands on the platform as they wait for a delayed train, or someone else waits for their lover to arrive. Rhythm is essential to understanding how someone or something is moving. The rhythms of movement were a constant fascination for Rudolf Laban (1879 – 1958). Laban was a pioneering teacher of dance and movement and as a choreographer helped create Modern Dance in Germany. The first half of his career in Switzerland and Germany was devoted to the promotion of dance as an artform. When he moved to England in 1938, he then applied his understanding of movement to help factory workers increase their productivity. So how did he end up in the 1940s helping workers on factory floors increase their productivity? Rhythm was the conceptual bridge between these two worlds.

Le rythme n'est pas un sujet, ni une chose, mais plutôt un prédicat ; c'est une description des processus et des structures dans le temps et l'espace : un moteur à essence qui tourne, quelqu'un qui se dépêche de se rendre à la gare, la façon dont quelqu'un se tient sur le quai en attendant un train retardé, ou quelqu'un d'autre qui attend l'arrivée de son amant. Le rythme est essentiel pour comprendre comment quelqu'un ou quelque chose bouge. Les rythmes du mouvement ont toujours fasciné Rudolf Laban (1879 - 1958). Pionnier de l'enseignement de la danse et du mouvement, Laban a contribué, en tant que chorégraphe, à la création de la danse moderne en Allemagne. La première moitié de sa carrière en Suisse et en Allemagne a été consacrée à la promotion de la danse en tant qu'art. Lorsqu'il s'est installé en Angleterre en 1938, il a appliqué sa compréhension du mouvement pour aider les ouvriers à accroître leur productivité. Comment s'est-il retrouvé dans les années 1940 à aider les travailleurs des usines à accroître leur productivité ? Le rythme était le pont conceptuel entre ces deux mondes.

Introduction

Quite possibly the reason that Fabian Bautz asked me to contribute an article to this issue of *Le Rythme* is that he gave a workshop on TaKeTina in a series that I organised in Autumn 1998 called *A Common Pulse*, each of them explored aspects of rhythm in performance. (This was one of the themed festivals of workshops I organised between 1995 and 2001 under the title *The International Workshop Festival*).

I also invited choreographer and dancer Dominique Dupuy to lead a workshop. At first, he declined: 'But, Dick, you know my work. I must be one of the few choreographers in France who doesn't count.' Then he reflected on the title, *A Common Pulse*, and realised that he could approach rhythm a more fundamental level – the pulse of our blood, the rhythm of our breathing. Indeed, he noted that, when left to their own devices, two dancers will naturally enter in step, but that when you count them in, they often fluff their entrance. Maybe it's to do with overriding instinctive behaviour with conscious intention. At the end of every day in our workshop we would dance the *Sardana*, a Catalan circle dance. He described it as the movement of a collective diaphragm (Dupuy's workshop focused on the physiology and rhythm of breathing). He would say that we are 'gravid' beings; an evocative pun on us being subject to gravity, but also and thereby pregnant with movement potential. To emphasise the relation between movement, breath and gravity, he would remind us that death from crucifixion came from our own body-weight preventing us from breathing.

In the evening we held public discussions with the workshop leaders where perspectives and experiences could be shared. Possibly because rhythm is such a border phenomenon, this festival was characterised by some of the most personal and intimate exchanges. It is precisely this elusive embodied sense of rhythm that I want to explore in my article.

A very brief biography

Laban was born in Bratislava, then in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Throughout his life he produced drawings and paintings (which might explain his fascination with notation). In 1910 he opened his first dance school in Munich. From 1913 he ran a summer school near Ascona in the Swiss canton of Ticino. His winter school moved to Zurich after the outbreak of War in 1914. His school attracted the attention of two teachers from Emile Jaques-Dalcroze's school in Hellerau near Dresden: Suzanne Perrottet and Mary Wigman. Both women left Dalcroze to study and later teach with Laban (a pattern of pupil-to-teacher that continued throughout his life). We will see from letters to Perrottet how Laban defined his ideas about rhythm through a critical dialogue with Dalcroze's Eurhythmics.

The Austro-Hungarian Empire dissolved after the First World War and the now stateless Laban worked throughout Germany developing a network of schools, pioneering a form of choral dance for amateurs, and creating countless choreographies. After three years working under Hitler's regime he left Germany for England in 1938. In England he adapted his ideas about movement to help women workers in factories, creating a method called Laban Lawrence Industrial Rhythm. He died in 1958.

1910s Defining an approach to rhythm distinct from Dalcroze's eurhythmics

Laban's early ideas about rhythm are discussed in letters he wrote to Perrottet between 1912 and 1917 and from a set of handwritten notes from between 1915 and 1917. His friend and collaborator the novelist Hans Brandenburg wrote very intelligently about these early experiments in an article entitled *A New School of Dance*¹. Here he highlights 'one of the most significant points in which Rudolf von Laban differs from Dalcroze':

Laban does not wish musical rhythms translated into physical ones, but he wants to bring out the physical rhythm within his pupils. He awakens in them the pleasure of movement, and when this pleasure is awakened, the student is supposed to produce the rhythm himself, rhythm with all its elements: swing, timing, beat, structure and order. The human body expresses its character only in movement, and the most beautiful thing is that it is, at the same time, spatial and temporal.

The phrase 'he wants to bring out the physical rhythm within his pupils' could be said of his work on rhythm throughout his career. Note the accent on pleasure (which will return in his final writings on rhythm). Another theme that resonates throughout Laban's writings is that 'The human body expresses its character only in movement' and that this movement is both spatial and temporal. Beyond saying that each person has their own movement signature, could one also say they have their unique rhythm?

Later, Brandenburg discusses how, 'for Laban, the highest and purest dance is in the forming of silent movement.' This quest for a 'pure' dance leads to 'the second point in which he differs from the creator of rhythmical gymnastics [i.e. Dalcroze] – he is striving for an art form in its totality.' However, this total art form is not Wagner's *Gesamtkunstwerk*, which consists of 'an accumulation of various aesthetic elements' but has its 'root in the totality of expression [...] given to man directly without the help of outer material, in the trinity of dance, sound and speech [*Tanz Ton Wort*].' He argues that for Laban 'it is natural and therefore of the utmost importance to let people speak' as well as to move and sing. The opposition is clear: Laban is interested in forms of expression that are 'given to man directly' 'without the help of outer material', by which he means music.

Brandenburg's last point concerns how Laban conceives of music and rhythm:

Laban uses music as rhythmical sound, as a help for awakening the joy of movement and, secondly, he uses it so that the body can learn from such infinitely and richly developed time

¹ A New School of Dance in my *Laban Sourcebook* (2011: Abingdon, Routledge), pp. 27-32

rhythm; but here Laban is very careful. The body should learn from music only after it has understood its own laws and its movement-rhythm thus avoiding the danger of learning and copying something that accords with the music but not with the body.

This comparison of Dalcroze's rhythmic gymnastics and Laban's notion of the body's 'own laws and its movement-rhythm' is telling: on the one hand, a methodologically cogent system and on the other, a vague principle. And yet it is precisely this embodied sense of rhythm that Laban will pursue throughout his writings.

In his letters to Suzanne Perrottet² Laban constantly criticizes Dalcroze for being too 'theoretical', too 'mechanical', in his approach to the relation between musical rhythm and movement. In a letter of 7th September 1912, he argues that, 'The harmony and the system Jaques-Dalcroze is very good for the mechanical development but later one needs one's soul, in combination with the brain'. Later he returns to his critique of 'brain' work, arguing that 'all this [Dalcrozean] theory is quite stupid, I never do it, or as little as possible. It spoils or hinders the creative force.' This distinction between a mechanical approach (or possibly, just 'methodical') and one that appeals to the soul and its creative force very much characterises Laban's thinking throughout his career.

Readers of *Le Rythme* will all know that Dalcroze had formally studied music; fewer know that Laban also composed music and played piano; unsurprisingly, he seemed to have been self-taught. In a letter of September 14th 1912, he writes about his 'musical experiments' which he had shared with his friends, 'among them my old friend, the sculptor [Hermann] Obrist [1862 – 1927]' who 'have been astonished'. This leads on to a discussion of how he conceives of the relation between music and gymnastics:

I have seen that, before all, one must add to rhythmical gymnastics, not only chorus work but also studies of 'psychic gymnastics' – this would lead from representationalism to expressionism. I have found the details for these studies in my work with music.

There are some key words here: 'chorus work', 'psychic gymnastics' and 'expressionism'. Laban's earliest works involved large choruses both for voice and movement, one of which was a plan to stage Brandenburg's choric tragedy *Der Sieg des Opfers*. In the 1920s he would create a number of important works for *Bewegungsschor* (movement choir). As for 'psychic gymnastics', is this not another instance of his work on the creative soul, on inner impulses? Finally, the reference to expressionism connects with *Ausdruckstanz* (expressive dance) a style which is associated with the early work of both Laban and Wigman and which we will see below contrasts with what he calls Dalcroze's 'impressionism'.

A later letter develops this thought and goes on to offer an explanation of what Laban means by the body's 'own laws and its movement-rhythm'. He explains that Dalcroze's 'impressionistic' approach is a 'Dance which follows the rhythms of music [...] and is furthermore influenced by something totally foreign to the human body.' Note how music is again described as 'outside', as 'foreign' to the dancer. This account tallies with Brandenburg's perceptive comments about music not 'according with the body'. After the disclaimer 'I can't and don't want to theorise too much', Laban then goes on explain

...the way through which I am trying to develop in a very individualistic manner, the body and its artistic movements. The poetry of tensions, the counterweight, the equilibrium, the constant changes of these tensions, as well in soloists as in a group – the exuberance of dimensional feeling, [...] of the driving force and the struggle between time and spatial dimensions.

Laban would write about these 'tensions' within the body (and within the expressive will) in his books and articles of the 1920s and I would argue that they inform his later concept of Effort. If one adds to the above list, Brandenburg's 'swing, timing, beat, structure and order', then we have a full account of Laban's early conception of rhythm.

2 Sourcebook, pp. 24 - 25

Notes on Rhythm (1915 – 1917)³

Now we turn to handwritten notes titled *Rythme*, written in French and German between 1915 and 1917. When in these early notes he argues that movement consists of degrees of force, the element of time, and the directedness of movements he looks forward to the Movement Factors of Time, Weight and Space in his book *Effort* (1947). Given his interest in the inner motivation of the dance he makes much reference to 'Will', which I would suggest is about the direction of a movement, i.e. the point to which I want to go. In this way Will is related to the concept of tension – it is the way I *intend* to go. One could say that Laban conceived of movements as lines of force extending out into space, in other words, as vectors. When Laban states that 'A concept is a tension result with directional emphasis' we can see that his notion of direction extends to the meaning of a movement or a musical phrase.

In connection with rhythm there is much discussion of swinging: the sense of the German *schwingen* embraces more than the rhythmic swinging of the arms or legs, it is about a certain oscillatory vibration to which we can become attuned. When in the third set of notes Laban discusses the 'vibrational resonance in relation to the previous tone', he is looking forward to harmony which 'can be seen as an outcome of force and rhythm'. He later goes on to argue that the 'rhythmic element of force (while striving for spatial, temporal and energetic expansion) materialises in different directions that are governed by laws of geometry and creates movement which can either be swinging [vibrating], resonating, or form creating.'

Laban conceives of rhythm as patternings of sound, of degrees of force, or, in terms of space, of degrees of expansion or contraction, of rising and falling, advance or retreat, and harmony as being the ways in which these individual factors combine. This explains my opening statement: a rhythm is a patterning that is grasped within a set of gradient variables; not a thing in itself, but a characteristic form of something. Warren Lamb told an anecdote of Laban exploding with rage when a student suggested that his movement scales were about going to specific points in space: for him the whole point of such exercises was to find the shapes that are formed when moving *between them*. These shapes are not about geometry but a feeling for movement in space, about rhythm.

The rhythm of work

Throughout Laban's writings he would make a distinction between functional (or working) and expressive (or artistic) movement. However, he also had a great sensitivity to the rhythms of working movements. A passage from *The World of the Dancer* (1920)⁴ and a look at his 1929 Festzug der Gewerbe (Parade of Crafts and Trades)⁵ in Vienna indicate his longstanding sensitivity to the rhythms of working movements. We then turn to the practical application of his ideas to the work environment, from the orchards of Dartington Hall to a variety of factories throughout England. The passage from *The World of the Dancer* is incredibly prescient in how it looks forward to his work twenty years later in England.

The mastering of every job of work demands a rhythmic order and a rhythmic interweaving of actions. [...] Every factory should maintain a dance-like rhythmic approach in terms of its overall organisation of the work forces, time, right down to the simplest operations.

The emphasis on a dance-like working rhythm looks forward to how Laban and F.W. Lawrence (a pioneer of business management) described their approach in a report for the Dartington Trust:

3 These notes will be found in Chapter 4 of my *The Art of Movement – Unpublished Writings by Rudolf Laban* (Abingdon: Routledge, Forthcoming)

4 *Sourcebook*, p. 64

5 *Sourcebook*, pp. 142 - 150

To bring that swing and lilt in labour
which makes efficiency a Pleasure.⁶

This recalls a phrase Brandenburg used above: ‘when this pleasure is awakened, the student is supposed to produce the rhythm himself’.

As part of a major cultural festival organized by Max Reinhard in 1929, Laban created a massive parade celebrating trades and crafts, from hat-making to black-smithing with the emphasis being on their working rhythms. One critic described the project:

A giant city had been made to participate. Laban, who was the designer as well as director, screenpainter and dance-master of this undertaking, had the idea of creating a dance festival of labour, which was to show the working rhythm of the various trades.

The Festzug brought together three major themes in Laban’s cultural mission: to create movement choirs (*Bewegungsschor*) for amateur groups, to create opportunities for festivity (*Festkultur*), and (thereby) to introduce pleasure in the workplace. In his autobiography *A Life in Dance* (1975) he reflects on how the Festzug celebrated the rhythms of various trades:

There is hardly a trade which in its manual operations does not have a tradition of working movements and also a festive application of them. The metal crafts provided no problem. Forging and hammering have a natural rhythm. I myself had to swing a hammer and learn to forge a horseshoe in a Styrian, Scottish or Italian way.⁷

He goes on to describe working songs and sayings of a number of trades and concludes that ‘out of all this, with perseverance and imagination, wove the dance fabric of the pageant’.

While all of the above indicates a very keen interest in working rhythms from the beginning of his career, this remained at a thematic level; Laban was not yet applying his artistic knowhow to the needs of the workplace. This happened after he was introduced in 1938 to Lawrence, who had been keen to understand Laban’s ideas about movement. On the one hand, you could say that Laban was crossing borders when he applied his ideas about movement to the field of industry. As such, Laban and Lawrence’s book *Effort* (1947) was a stunningly original study. On the other, the quotations above indicate a continuity of thinking. Indeed, their industrial work is rooted in a humanity that is evident throughout Laban’s writings, a humanity that distinguishes their approach to F.W. Taylor’s *Time and Motion* which was based on establishing a best way and time of doing a job. In contrast Laban focused on the motivation and capacity of the worker and not some abstract model of the task; it was about matching the worker to the right job for them. Rhythm was at the heart of this humanistic approach:

The rhythm of man in his work and in his whole life should achieve the adaptation of the flow of material to the dance of life, benefiting the producer and worker as well as the consumer, and avoiding many disturbances of an industrial civilisation. The re-discovery of the meaning of rhythm can contribute towards a solution of the purely human problems arising where many people work for long hours together in a common task (...).

Laban’s theory of *Effort* offered a way of understanding humans through how they move. He argued that each of eight *Effort Actions* (Punching, Dabbing, Flicking, Whipping, Wringing, Floating, Gliding, Pressing) consist of three movement factors:

Weight (Light or Strong),
Space (Direct or Indirect) and
Time (Quick or Sudden).

Thus, a Gliding action is Sustained, Direct and Light; change Light to Strong and you get Pushing, change the Direct to Indirect and you get Wringing. Laban offered a means of

6 *The Art of Movement*, Chapter 15

7 *Sourcebook*, p. 145

analysing movements and how they transform from one to another. In his unpublished *Effort and Recovery* (written 1951-52) he proposed a correlation between combinations of movement factors and mental states and worked at the Withymead Centre (a therapeutic community run along Jungian lines) where he put his ideas about the psychology of movement into practice.

Laban's student Warren Lamb made an essential shift in thinking about movement and rhythm. With the guiding concept that movement is a 'process of variation' he proposed that it could only be grasped in the constant variations of the motion factors. He therefore recast Laban's movement factors Weight, Space and Time into dynamic processes where a movement has increasing or decreasing degrees of Pressure, and Focus, and is Accelerating and Decelerating (the present participle indicating a process). While Laban offers a bipolar 'either or', Lamb argues for infinite degrees of variations. For Laban, transformation was at the higher level of effort action, for Lamb it was at the level of motion factor. And, of course, the variations in these motion factors have a rhythmic pattern (a movement signature) that is unique to each person.

Lamb's landmark publication *Posture and Gesture* (1965) was in turn an inspiration for Child Psychologist Daniel Stern who introduced the notion of the Vitality Affect in *The Interpersonal World of the Infant*. In his *Forms of Vitality* Stern explains how he slowly changed the term 'Vitality Affects' into 'Forms of Vitality'. He explains that he has, over the years, used different terms to describe this phenomenon 'including "vitality affects," "temporal feeling shapes," temporary feeling contours," [...] "vitality contours", and now "dynamic forms of vitality."⁸ But how do we recognise something as elusive as a form of vitality? Stern begins by saying what Forms of Vitality are not: they are not emotions, or motional states, or perceptions, or even sensations.

They fall in between the cracks. They are the felt experience of force – in movement – with a temporal contour, and a sense of aliveness, of going somewhere. They do not belong to any particular content. They are more form than content. They concern the "How," the manner, and the style, not the "What" or the Why.⁹

Although he shares with Laban and Lamb the motion factors of Force, Time, Direction (which is just basic physics) his interest is in 'the felt experience' of them.

Stern argues that a Vitality Affect is experienced as a whole - a gestalt - rather than as its constituent elements; his theory 'posits that four different components are directly integrated into one whole, a form of vitality'¹⁰. To illustrate the point, he draws an analogy between phoneme and word – we experience sounds as meaningful wholes, as meaningful words rather than their constituent phonemes. Stern notes how 'we may gather from someone's arm gesture the perceptual qualities of rapid acceleration, speed, and fullness of display. But we will not experience the gesture in terms of the perceptual qualities of timing, intensity, and shape; we will experience it directly as "forceful" - that is, in terms of a vitality affect.'¹¹ His attention is neither on the combination nor the variation of the movement factors but on the end result – the perceptual whole they create. Moreover, this feeling-perception is quite as much a bodily as a mental phenomenon. A Form of Vitality unites 'the elements that put flesh on experience so that it is felt and seen as coming from a living person existing in our real daily world – someone who moves in time and space, and with force and direction'¹². Here, surely there is a connection with Laban since this feeling and empathy is rooted in forms of human movement.

Put another way, this fellow feeling results from the actions of mirror neurons, which have both sensory and motor functions. When we say the words 'run', 'jump' or 'skip', the

8 Stern 2010, p. 17

9 Stern 2010, p. 30

10 Stern 2010, p. 30

11 Stern 1998, p. 158

12 Stern 2010, p. 30

part of the motor cortex dealing with that movement also lights up – ‘An imagined movement is created alongside the word meaning.’ In other words, we can mentally experience a movement without physically performing it. More than that, we can enter into another’s mental state – their vitality state - by attuning to their form of movement.

To “take in” another’s sigh one has to have been inside their skin. Identification and internalisation are in this sense more complete immersions in another’s dynamic experience than empathy needs to be. Without the vitality forms, identification and internalisation would be like rules of action, not a felt immersion.¹³

Here we have come far from Laban and Lamb’s movement observation and are in the realm of an interpersonal exchange that happens through movement.

It may seem that we have taken a detour in discussing Vitality Affects, but hasn’t Stern described them as manifesting themselves as forms of time (‘temporal feeling shapes,’ ‘temporary feeling contours,’ ‘vitality contours,’ ‘dynamic forms of vitality’)? And isn’t there a deep connection with Laban’s vision of ‘the dance of life’? Rhythm is the form in which we capture recognisable kinds of human movement, is the means by which we can sympathise, feel for, and yes, dance together.

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13 Stern 1998, p. 142

A Tale of Two States: Artist and Teacher

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In 2020 he earned the Diplôme Supérieur from the Institut Jaques-Dalcroze in Geneva, and now directs the Dalcroze Program at the Kaufman Music Center in New York. He has been on the faculty of the Dalcroze School of the Rockies Summer Academy since 2019. He is the creator and music director of Loco Motors, an improvising ensemble for music and movement, inspired by the combined practices of Dalcroze and the tradition of free jazz. The group is currently serving as artist-in-residence for the New York Chapter of the Dalcroze Society of America. He has lived in Brooklyn since 1992.

I recognise two selves within me: artist/creator and teacher. Each with their separate histories, they are two proud, sovereign nations, both with their own cultures, languages, customs and history. For years I thought I loved Dalcroze because it would one day unite these two parts. Lately, I think I love it because it has forced me to clearly define the nature of these two aspects of my personality: artist and teacher. Though I function best when I keep these two worlds separate, learning to cross the border with ease ensures the continued health and vibrancy of both.

Je reconnais deux êtres en moi : artiste/créateur et enseignant. Chacun avec son histoire distincte, ce sont deux nations fières et souveraines, chacune avec sa culture, sa langue, ses coutumes et son histoire. Pendant des années, j'ai pensé que j'aimais Dalcroze parce cela allait un jour unir ces deux parties. Dernièrement, je pense que je l'aime parce cela m'a obligé à définir clairement la nature de ces deux aspects de ma personnalité : artiste et enseignant. Bien que je fonctionne mieux lorsque je garde ces deux mondes séparés, apprendre à franchir la frontière avec souplesse garantit le bien-être et la vitalité des deux.

As a child I dreaded art class. In each class we had 'a project' to do. The teacher would give us the materials we were to work with and tell us exactly what to do with them. Each week, I would stare at the art table, paralysed. I had a strong aversion to simply following the guidelines. I needed to find my own way. I would look at the materials and anxiously wait for an idea to come. Eventually something would spark and I would start to work, but by then the class would be almost over, and so I often left with my work unfinished. I told myself I was not artistic.

In contrast, my entry into teaching was effortless and untroubled. In high school, I played clarinet and saxophone, and one day my band director observed me working with some younger students in my section. He told me I had a natural gift for teaching. That teaching could be something one had a natural gift for, that it wasn't something you had to learn how to do, had never occurred to me, but I took him at his word and began teaching clarinet in the basement of my parents' house while I was still in high school.

Maybe as a result of being told I had "the gift" I never gave much thought as to how to teach when I first started. I simply gave them the same method books my own teachers had used. I showed them fingerings, showed them how to create an embouchure, how to use the breath to get a good tone. I helped them count the rhythms with the same systems my teachers had used for me. If they weren't successful, it wasn't my fault. They simply weren't practising enough.

For my bachelor's degree, I studied the saxophone and clarinet in both the jazz and classical departments. I knew that I would be teaching in some form, but I had no interest in teaching general music in public schools or being a band director, and because it didn't seem necessary to pay all that money to learn to do something I already seemed to know how to do, I pursued a performance degree rather than a degree in music education.

Most of my teachers in college were working musicians. They were fine musicians who knew their instruments and could read anything anyone put in front of them. Many of them were excellent jazz players, but it was clear that most of them had not set out to be educators. Though it was assumed that most people would teach at least part time to supplement their income, no one ever discussed how to teach, and most teachers did not have clearly defined teaching methods. For the classical players, a music teacher was someone who told you what to do and what not to do. It wasn't the most exciting way to earn money but it wasn't hard (one of my clarinet teachers regularly fell sound asleep as I was playing my etudes, a sad commentary for both of us.) Teaching jazz was even easier, just write out some "licks" (melodic lines) for your students and give them some interesting chord substitutions. If they have some talent and work hard, they'll pick it up just like you did.

There are gifted, passionate, inspiring teachers who can teach this way. At its best it is an apprenticeship that can be meaningful and life-altering for both teacher and students. (The

peaks and valleys of this approach are described wonderfully in pianist Jeremy Denk's recent memoir *Every Good Boy Does Fine: A Love Story in Music Lessons* (2022).) But it didn't work for me. Two years after graduating from music school with my two degrees, I was unable to envision a satisfying future in music or even music education for myself, and I walked away entirely from playing and teaching. I felt unmoored but liberated. I became obsessed with John Cage, and completely stopped even listening to recorded music. I traveled to Turkey to teach English. I wrote poetry that I couldn't understand and read books about philosophy, psychology and religion.

When I stepped into my first Dalcroze class about 5 years later, I was teaching English as a second language (ESL). I enjoyed the activeness of language teaching. The categories of learning made sense to me, real-world skills like speaking, listening, reading, writing. My primary responsibility, once the grammar rules were explained, was to be a kind of 'activity director.' I was simply there to facilitate practice and immersion in the language.

Dalcroze seemed to me to be a way of teaching "music as a second language", and I immediately wanted the teacher's job. It took some time for that to happen, but the transition from ESL teacher to Dalcroze teacher did not really require a leap of imagination for me. (The actual leaping was another matter...) The Dalcroze teacher waited for the students to discover for themselves rather than be told—just what I'd missed in my own music education. There was a different balance of participation between teacher and student. In Dalcroze the teacher wasn't just sitting in a chair listening to the student and waiting to critique, the teacher was participating along with the students, even as he or she was leading them. It seemed that the Dalcroze teachers I encountered had found the perfect balance between artist and teacher, and I wanted that for myself. Finally, here was a way to integrate those aspects of personality—artist and teacher—which had eluded almost all of the teachers I had worked with in high school and college.

I slowly built up my skills as a Dalcroze teacher, eventually becoming director at the school in New York City where I began my studies 25 years earlier. I steeped myself in other philosophies of pedagogy during a masters at Columbia's Teachers College. My *laissez-faire* attitude towards teaching was a thing of the past.

While I was working to become a teacher, I also tried to nurture my creative self. I experimented with composition and improvisation. I created and played in improvising groups. For a doctorate at Stony Brook University in New York I produced six concerts of original compositions and improvised music. I was less and less the young boy staring at a box of art supplies wondering what to do, more and more a confident, creative and even productive artist.

But with all of that, my teacher and artist-selves still did not feel as integrated as I imagined they would. I seldom brought my own music into my Dalcroze classes. Why? I noticed that I played the piano completely differently when improvising for myself than I did in the Dalcroze classroom. I was puzzled by this apparent split until I began to compare what I need to be successful in the classroom with what allows me to feel free as an artist.

The needs of the teacher, the needs of the artist

I have two main needs in the classroom: clear educational goals that I can support, and the freedom to reach those goals as I see fit. During a typical week, I work with every age from three years-old to adult. Whether I am teaching musicianship in a community music school, training future Dalcroze teachers, or giving ear training courses in a university, this need for clarity of purpose and freedom of method must guide every decision I make in order for me to feel successful.

As is well documented, music plays a central role in the Dalcroze classroom. We teach through music, and so I must improvise with precision and clarity. On a good day, the music not only organizes the students, but guides, instructs and even corrects them. For especially

challenging activities, clear and conventional harmonic and phrasing choices often best serve the moment. Except in rare circumstances, there is no room for fuzziness.

My needs as an artist are almost entirely different. In this state, I mostly do not need or want clear goals. In fact, clear goals are apt to shut down my creative process. As an improviser in artist-creator mode (rather than teacher mode) I am mostly unable to proceed if my analytical self is too dominant. My primary objective is to play something I've never played before. To do that, I often need to play in a way that I might not "understand" in an analytical way. The empty space from my childhood art class is actually an essential starting place for me. I am just as paralyzed as I was then unless a voice inside me says, "You don't have to know what you are doing. There is nothing to understand." Yes, that 'nothing' may soon become 'something', but the 'something' must hover over and flirt with the 'nothing' in order for me to make a start. Sparks can only fly once I gave up all ambition.

Crossing the border

Separating and objectifying these two aspects of my personality, the Artist and the Teacher, has allowed me to embrace the differences in their pursuits: art that may want to be messy, mysterious and open to interpretation, and teaching that needs to be clear, consistent and goal-oriented. I am beginning to understand how the Artist and the Teacher might be of use to one other. I am learning when I should cross the border and why.

For example, I now call on the Artist and the Teacher to collaborate in lesson planning. I used to sit and plan my classes at the computer—using mostly my teacher-self. What will happen first? Then what? And so on until the end. With a half a dozen completely different classes to plan during a week I was beginning to feel like I was my own secretary, and not a particularly good or efficient one. Now, I begin with the Artist. I move, I play, I sing, I open myself up. When I feel sufficiently open, I pour out possibilities, questions, ideas, references, into a notebook. When I feel as though I could sketch out the lesson on the back of a cocktail napkin, I am ready to go to the computer. It is then the Teacher's job to shape, order and design the activities to meet the educational goals of the class and institution. The Teacher excels at paring away the unnecessary or unworkable; considering how much time would be involved in each activity and whether or not it is appropriate for a particular group of students. By consciously switching modes as necessary I feel more able to bring something that is both artistically alive and pedagogically sound into the classroom.

Mostly in a eurhythmics class, I call on the Teacher to improvise rather than the Artist, who is likely to go off on tangents and muddy the waters. However, there are times when I want the students (particularly the adults) to set aside what they know (or think they know) about music. Perhaps they are having difficulty experiencing music as something that lives and breathes rather than as a collection of calcified abstractions and representations. This is definitely a job for the Artist. By entering into that space, myself, I might create an opening for them to, for example, stop thinking of the rhythm of walking as simply a quarter note, but rather to experience the countless ways humans accomplish this miracle of locomotion, with the infinite variety of nuances available to them. The Teacher must supervise, however, as the Artist is unpredictable. He is inclined to ask unanswerable questions, gleefully see from multiple perspectives, substitute infinite shades of grey where before there was only black and white. As long as the Artist realizes he is only making a guest appearance, all will be well.

I feel free to play and compose without worrying whether it will be useful in the classroom. It is now easier for me to accept the healthy mix of the predictable and unpredictable, clarity and mystery, and the oddities of harmony and rhythm in my own compositions with a more sympathetic ear. In fact, this summer, I found myself using my own compositions in the classroom almost exclusively, quirks and all. I have also revived my performing group, Locomotors, with a plan to integrate dance with my creative partner

Dawn Pratson and New York jazz musician Marty Ehrlich. Performances will be presented as part of a new artist residency that I am hoping to create with the New York Chapter of the Dalcroze Society of America.

The paradox, or at least irony, should now be clear: like the phenomenon of falling in love, the longed-for unification began to occur the moment I let go of wanting it.

Eurhythmics, Art and Education

I am not at all sure what Emile Jaques-Dalcroze would have thought of me as a teacher of his method. But reading his essay “Eurhythmics and Art” from *Eurhythmics, Art and Education* (1930) (I can’t help but notice the separation of the three subjects), I am fairly confident he would have recognised the artist in me. His method books can seem to be obsessed with order and classification: long series of gestures, dozens of rules of nuance, a taxonomy of skipping, and so on. But just as ancient humans lived lives exponentially richer than the evidence their stone tools call to mind, Emile Jaques-Dalcroze was a living, breathing, creative artist, he wanted eurhythmics to help speed the passage between the more and less accessible parts of ourselves. The practice was intended “to act equally upon the subconscious and the conscious” (Dalcroze, 1930, p. 188). There was even a place for this work within Dalcroze education itself:

... since our entire spiritual life originates in the co-operation between our conscious and our unconscious nature, the educator has a dual part to play. He should endeavour, on the one hand, to put the child in possession of all his conscious powers of expression; and, on the other hand, to enable him to recover lost instincts and to summon forth in him the greatest possible number of instinctive manifestations of every kind. (Dalcroze, 1930, p.189)

Jaques-Dalcroze’s own creative output, from the theatrical creations of Hellerau that inspired a generation of innovative musicians, dancers and theatre artists to the hundreds of pieces of music that he himself wrote, demonstrates that eurhythmics and artistic creation can indeed have a symbiotic relationship.

In the same essay, Dalcroze proclaimed that it was “a new art that we are, quite naturally, invited to construct, new to our times” (1930, p.184). Could the collection of practices inspired by Emile Jaques-Dalcroze become a wellspring for the creation of music, dance and theatre for our own times, for this moment? The rich array of articles in the previous edition of this very journal, devoted to the “Artistic Identity of Eurhythmics” (*Le Rythme*, 2021), strongly suggest this possibility. Likewise, during my residence at the Institute Jaques-Dalcroze in the fall semesters of 2018 and 2019, I saw students and faculty alike challenging one another to uncover their own artistic identities through the combination of sound and movement. For me, this bodes well for our future. Perhaps relearning to navigate through these twin poles of art and education will allow the practice of Dalcroze to grow and thrive in a world increasingly full of unknowns. I now know that for myself, at least, it is essential.

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Crossing Borders— A Courageous Step

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Who would not agree that stepping in front of a class, in front of the individual students, can be associated with a state of suspense that arises even after decades of professional activity? Although this may be true of other professions, what is particular to our profession is the need for extensive cooperation and dialogue with the participants. This is the prerequisite that makes the mutual artistic and creative process in eurhythmics possible in the first place. You might well ask from what dynamic does this suspense arise... It's simply the certainty that in teaching eurhythmics, we will be faced with the unknown, with challenges of self-transcendence, of surprises, of demands upon our courage to face and overcome limitations. In fact, we can say that "Crossing Borders" is the sine qua non of both the teaching and learning of eurhythmics. From its beginnings, this practice had to do with the unknown territory of self-actualisation, and this expansion of the self is inherent in its methodology, one that will always involve overcoming boundaries.

Qui ne serait pas d'accord que le fait de s'adresser à une classe, à des étudiants individuels, peut être associé à une sensation de suspense qui se manifesterait même après des décennies d'activité professionnelle ? Bien que cela puisse être vrai pour d'autres professions, ce qui est particulier à la nôtre est la nécessité d'une coopération et d'un dialogue approfondis avec les participants. C'est la condition pré-requise qui rend possible, de premier abord en rythmique, la réciprocité des processus artistique et créatif. Vous pourriez bien vous demander en quoi consiste ce suspense... Tout simplement, c'est la certitude qu'en enseignant la rythmique, nous serons toujours confrontés à l'inconnu, à des défis de dépassement de soi, à des surprises, à des risques, à des demandes de courage pour affronter et dépasser nos limites. En fait, nous pouvons dire que « franchir les limites » est la condition sine qua non de l'enseignement et de l'apprentissage de la rythmique. Dès ses débuts, cette pratique a eu à faire avec le territoire inconnu d'auto-actualisation, et cette expansion de soi-même est inhérente à sa méthodologie, qui impliquera toujours le dépassement des frontières.

Introduction

When eurhythmics came into being at the beginning of the 20th century, the sciences were presenting ever broader vistas of internal and external states. Psychotherapists opened unprecedented views onto the complexity and effects of our inner worlds, and the physicists told of quantum worlds beyond the atom. The stretches of imagination these pronouncements required were parallel to the stretches of self that Émile Jacques-Dalcroze envisioned for each individual in their practice of eurhythmics.

Although there are many beneficial effects that come from this practice, the ability that it fosters to adapt to shifting situations and novel events has never been more important than it is now. The world of the individual that Dalcroze's contemporaries experienced was comparatively stable when placed side by side with today's world. The self-actualisation initially envisioned for each was then not primarily described as needed for useful reactions to vast external changes, but rather for the development of an aware and autonomous self, especially as a musician. In today's world however, the crossing of many borders is foisted upon us whether we want to adapt to these changes or not. They can be anything from upgrading a technology to radically changing our lifestyles for the benefit of future generations. In addition to the claims made upon us externally, we may be challenged due to our personal history and cultural socialisation.

Eurhythmics exercises offer a practice that develops the existential flexibility to deal with this new world of accelerated changes—changes that demand encountering our inner limitations and finding ways to transcend them. They cultivate in us the necessary skills to adapt in terms of what could be called spontaneous functionality. Absent the practice of eurhythmics, I don't know how one can develop these abilities, except on a case-by-case basis—and the school of life often teaches through a lengthy process...

Enduring tension—Crossing boundaries

In our teaching activities the participants, be they children, adolescents, adults, seniors, or people with special needs, all are exposed to a *Spannungsfeld*, a “field of tension” created and influenced by the multiple perspectives and determinative conditions of time, space, forces, and form. In addition, the energies natural to group-dynamics inevitably come into play and add unknown variables. These in their own way, shape the process, have consequences, can surprise, delight, disappoint, or give rise to breakthroughs and insights. For example: who is prevailing and how; who is following whom; who is adapting or not; who is guiding, and who decides the next movement; which dynamics inspire or slow down the process; how can obvious inhibitions be removed through suggestions or recommendations? The list is long...

As deliberate as the process of teaching eurhythmics is, a successful outcome can only happen through and with all those involved in the lesson. In this process, the ‘breaking’ of boundaries doesn’t happen as a consciously willed collective decision-making process. Although initiated by the teacher, it is sustained by the motivation and commitment of the participants.

Teaching eurhythmics is always about the whole person; about their self-determination and the gradual development of abilities to perceive and learn how to manage impulses of movement, be they inner or outer. In a classroom these are music related, but the skills that arise have an application well beyond it. Therefore, the exercises and tasks should always offer a wide scope of freedom, growth of development and self-direction. The freedom can consist in the choice of tempo, proportion, intensity, form of movement, and duration; it can arise between improvised or choreographed, as well as between other parameters and their polarities. It can also be a spontaneous decision to solve and configure an exercise alone, or else together with other members of the group.

To offer this wide field of possibilities teachers of eurhythmics must repeatedly leave their own comfort zone and, of course, let go of the supposedly safe haven of a lesson based only on certainty and control. In letting go, they enter a field of suspense and unpredictability wherein they undergo a kind of eagerness for the step-by-step solutions of the participants. This state is precious; to enter and to endure it is not necessarily easy. It requires ongoing courage even after decades of practice and experience. Eugen Herrigel describes it in his book, *Zen in the Art of Archery* (1973), how finally it is a matter of looking for the target within oneself and no longer to the outside. This present “tense” is a precondition for providing access to our creative potential.

This approach catalysed my appreciation for eurhythmics when I learned it from my teacher, Amélie Hoellering, who had studied with one of Dalcroze’s students, Elfriede Feudel. Hoellering states:

Rhythmic-Education is an education of movement based on the “Rhythmic Principle”. It must include all movements, the somatic, emotional and the mental, rational. Flexibility in thinking, feeling and performing is simultaneously activated by a rhythmic task. However, it is crucial how to work with the tasks, how to work with the group and the individual students. Our teaching is dialogical, that is, an interplay between the teacher and the group, as well as between the group members. The possible solutions to a task cannot be predetermined, pre-formulated and expected. They all hold surprises that lie dormant in each individual. So, there can be no course planning, no lesson plans and curricula. The student must determine and correct for himself how he wants to have the solution and how he wants to adapt and/or assert himself within the group and how he understands his role in the particular moment.¹

1 Hoellering, A. (1991). Journal for the 25th anniversary of RHYTHMIKON. München: Gmeiner. (pp. 25-26). (Transl. by C. F. B.)

Questions reveal boundaries

All questions that the teacher offers to the class participants give them a feel for ways to participate and to interact. Above all, these questions imply the necessity for self-determination, the one character trait we especially want to promote. For us teachers however, asking questions carries the risk of the incalculable, of surprise, and possibly also of disruption.

In many ways, children are more of a challenge to teach than adults. After all, who are less aware of social and personal boundaries than children? Although we can present them with age and authority as our backbone and reassurance, still we know how quickly this assumed self-confidence can be shaken if we are not honest to the core with ourselves and with the children. Their very inexperience with boundaries fosters in them an ability to sense what is going on behind the scenes, and so we can only succeed with children when we are sincere, in the moment, authentic in our reactions, and also willing to set limits when necessary.

Because most children are unfamiliar managing the combination of freedom and limitations offered in eurhythmics exercises, the above ways of being are the regulators when a child's individual need for attention and care upsets the balance within the class. Naturally, this skill set must not be applied to establish a balance that is primarily comfortable for the teacher, but rather to allow the children to gradually choose from a wider range of potential actions, movements and options.

In innumerable smallest learning steps, the way out of complete dependence and lack of autonomy into possible freedom and independence is sought and rehearsed. Each rhythmic exercise creates a situation that invites

- to act, to dare oneself (involving the movement used in each case.)
- to examine, to change, to choose, to know
- to stand up for oneself, to assert oneself, but also
- to flexibly integrate the other, the group, the environment, the settings.

That this flourishes in the various situations and tasks is the goal of the lesson.²

This invitation to 'dare', as Amélie Hoellering calls it, means to explore, to go to the limits and to dare even more. It also means to risk: to enter unfamiliar areas of play and movement, to encounter forms, and then to explore these new territories with their qualities and demands. It requires a permanent readiness to question boundaries and limitations, to shift them and, as teachers, to open new spaces and enfold new layers of practice into the lesson. Within its flexible structure then, eurhythmics is a training field for the requisite self-direction that develops and unfolds the individual's private and social self.

Just as today's *Zeitgeist* requires all of us to exercise our own self-determination, in such a spirit did the founder of eurhythmics, Émile Jaques-Dalcroze, develop a radically new practice of music education, one that required unprecedented ways of acting and thinking. In his *Notes Barriollées* (1948), he addresses philosophical and psychological dimensions of the human being that until then, were rarely reflected in music education. At the center of these daily notes, the importance of personal development—including his own—is clearly expressed.

The extract of a letter by Dalcroze, written to a journalist in 1913 states as a goal the very objective that we could say is most needed in today's supposedly civilised world:

The goal [...] of my method is to develop a close interrelationship between man's physical and mental capacities. It is a means to compel the students to seek clarity as to their own nature. Its practice develops concentration, vitality, and the ability to evaluate one's perceptions. My method encourages the student to realise his visions and to avoid taking on more than he can handle. Overall, it seeks to validate each student's personality and lead him to be comfortable

2 Hoellering, A. in: Petzold, H. (1977). *Psychotherapie & Körperdynamik*. Vol.1. Paderborn: Junfermann. (p. 285). (Translation by C. F. Bautz)

showing who he is. [...] My method is a school that preserves the right of self-determination, encourages consistent endeavour, as well as high moral and physical standards.³

As well known to eurhythmics teachers as his words may be, the fact that they stand the test of time is evidence of this discipline's understanding of core human needs. Eurhythmics doesn't just benefit a person living at a certain time, but those living at different times, and it does so because we are asked to practise the fundamental and essential dynamics of living itself, regardless of circumstances.

This was well understood by Elfriede Feudel, one of Émile Jaques-Dalcroze's first students, who later became one of the most influential pioneers of eurhythmics in Germany. The title of her book *Durchbruch zum Rhythmischen in der Erziehung* (*Breakthrough to the Rhythmical in Education*, transl. F.B.) reflects the boundary-breaking ideas and potential of the revolutionary rhythmic approach originated by her teacher. In it, she writes that this *breakthrough* was necessary in order to educate healthy, proficient people.⁴

Her teaching methods clearly evidenced her own self-actualisation. The students knew that Elfriede Feudel always let the door of her office slam very loudly on her way to class so that everyone could be ready, or rather, had to be fully present; waiting to see what would be the subject of her lesson this time. According to Amélie Hoellering, when Feudel taught in Leipzig during the last years of World War II, in the event of a bomb scare, lessons were by no means to be canceled or even interrupted! If adhering to this rule is not about crossing borders in oneself, then I don't know what is. Such an approach to teaching demanded that the students remain present in the *'here and now'*, connected in time and space with themselves, with the others, and with everything that could sustain them. To go through this process becomes an experience of strength and self-mastery.

As much as it is asked of the student to cross borders in order to self-actualise, so it is asked of the teacher. When Amélie Hoellering, herself became a teacher she sensed that an additional layer of awareness could be added to the dynamics of eurhythmics. While her own teacher was already campaigning at various levels of educational policy in Germany for the introduction of eurhythmics as a subject in elementary school, Hoellering followed her inner voice to seek more knowledge and insight into the human condition. She then began to study psychology in Stuttgart, and received a diploma for paediatric and youth psychotherapy in 1952.

The tension between the poles of psychotherapy with children and adolescents and what she had experienced with E. Feudel in Leipzig and Stuttgart, was resolved with the insight that eurhythmics offers a field of practice, play, and experience of polarities within which the human being could, and had to, find their balance while in motion. This was for her a pathway of exercise for the unison of 'thinking' and 'doing'. In the process, the student crosses into another state of being that is simultaneously contemplative and alert. Amélie Hoellering writes:

That the music educator's bold move to include movement tasks within conservative music instruction was more than an attempt to make music instruction more attractive and effective was well known by the founder of this practice. He was the first to recognise movement as the bridge that connects man both to himself and to his environment, and saw that maintaining its quality must be an indispensable task of education.⁵

Further on, she writes that it is the role of the teacher to see where the individual or collective potential for improvement remains unused.

3 Jaques-Dalcroze, É. *Le Rythme*. Edition 1977 (pp. 36-37) (transl. unknown).

4 Hoellering, A. in: Petzold, H. (1977). *Psychotherapie & Körperdynamik*. Vol.1, Paderborn: Junfermann. (p. 267). (Translation by C. F.B.)

5 Ibid. p. 266

The rhythm teacher must ensure that by changing the tasks and rules of the game, simplifying or making them more difficult, results are made possible that encourage participants to continue to improve.⁶

Hoellering's insights into the deep-psychological connections of human developmental processes, as well as her experience of eurhythmics' methodology, led her to the conviction that eurhythmics also has its place as an accompanying measure in therapeutic processes. In her lectures, she often spoke of the preventive potential of eurhythmics. Prevention of what? From the loss of self-determination and autonomy—a risk even more relevant today than it was in her time, half a century ago.

Conclusion

Crossing borders is inseparable from the practice of eurhythmics; every exercise and task emphasise our freedom to choose. Even more, they challenge it through the expansion of limitations and the breaking-through of personal impediments. From such experiences confidence can grow outside of pre-conceived limits and restraints, beyond fears and resistances. The result is that entrenched attitudes, of a physical as well as of a psycho-emotional kind, will dissolve.

The dynamic nature of eurhythmics lessons will always create a "Spannungsfeld" that includes the polarities of the "Self" and the "Other". Crossing borders in such instants is a key for transformation, for new experiences of self, new perspectives, and new possibilities to act, to react, and to create. These experiences offer challenges and opportunities to leave our comfort zones and to be fully present in the moment. The goal is to become more integrated, more holistic—not as an end point, but as a stepping stone to the next venture into unknown lands of discovery and development, towards more autonomy and more self-actualisation.

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Movement Improvisation in a “Hybrid” Space

Exposing colonial and elitist adherences

Jenny Ribbat



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This article is about selected aspects of Homi Bhabha's thoughts on culture, cultural differences and identities. The specific methodology and working method of eurhythmics represents a microcosm of cultural encounter. Bhabha's thoughts are related to the field of movement improvisation in eurhythmics and possible applicability and intersections are being illuminated. In a second step, Bhabha's critique of still existing colonial structures in society and the dominance of an Anglo-American perspective on educational institutions in the West is included in order to outline which discrepancies result for eurhythmic teaching.

Cet article traite de certains aspects de la réflexion d'Homi Bhabha sur la culture, les différences culturelles et les identités. La méthodologie spécifique et la méthode de travail de la rythmique représentent un microcosme de la rencontre culturelle. Les pensées de Bhabha sont liées au domaine de l'improvisation du mouvement en rythmique et les possibilités d'application et de recoupement sont mises en lumière. Dans un deuxième temps, la critique de Bhabha concernant les structures coloniales encore existantes dans la société et la domination de la perspective anglo-américaine sur les institutions éducatives en Occident est incluse afin de souligner les divergences qui en résultent pour l'enseignement de la rythmique.

Introduction

In an interview by Jonathan Rutherford (1990) regarding some relevant key features of culture, cultural changes and construction of culture Homi Bhabha states that there is no reference point of an initial "essence" to a culture (p. 210). Culture is always to be considered to be "continually in a process of hybridity" (ibid., p. 211). Different influences clash and open a *third space* from which new positions can arise.

These new positions are not linked to old strategies, but form new ones. This can also have a political influence (ibid.).

The original is never finished or complete in itself. The 'originary' is always open to translation so that it can never be said to have a totalised prior moment of being or meaning - an essence (ibid., p. 210).

Contrary forces influence and maintain cultural "identities". The "differences" are actually constituting culture but can at the same time not be simplified by "universal concepts" (Rutherford, pp. 208-209): "Within the notion of cultural difference, I try to place myself in that position of liminality, in that productive space of the construction of culture as difference, in the spirit of alterity and otherness" (ibid., p. 209).

Concerning cultural identities Bhabha proclaims in his collection of essays "The Location of Culture" (Bhabha, 1994) that people are not delimited to certain aspects of identification, such as class, gender or race. These are singular limiting signs of difference: "What is at issue is the performative nature of differential identities" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 313).

In the in-between spaces, the traversing of the places at the borders, new spaces of action are explored and created that contradict and invalidate traditional constructions of singular cultural identities: "'The people' always exist as a multiple form of identification, waiting to be created and constructed" (ibid., p. 220).

Through these multilayered identifications, individual reshapes emerge that invalidate assumed valences: "This interstitial passage between fixed identifications opens up the possibility of a cultural hybridity that entertains difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 5).

Movement improvisation and translational processes

Some thoughts of Bhabha are being taken into consideration to approach the relevance of *hybridity* concerning *identity* and space in the processes of movement improvisation.

Actions in movement improvisations in eurhythmics lessons have effects on the moving partners. These effects are based on individual interpretations of the meanings in the interactive process. The interpretations do not have to be congruent with the intention of the person acting (Schaefer, 1992, p. 154). This results in a state of suspension: on the basis of an individually interpreted meaning of one (movement) action, the next ones follow. A space is thus created in which new things are negotiated, since the situation is absolutely unique and open to interpretation. In this context, the potential openness to results should also be mentioned as inherent to the method of eurhythmics (Schaefer, 1992, p. 206).

It is a moment of deciding how to move and thus the information is released into the space and influences new actions. The movers act at thresholds where different information converges and can potentially reconnect. This can be related to features of a *third space* according to Bhabha (Bhabha, 1990, p. 211).

Since eurhythmics works with translational and transitional processes of different media, it is concerned with the limits and possibilities of the individual media per se. On the one hand, these border areas of a translation possibility mark the particularities of the individual media (music, movement, visual arts, texts etc.), but they are also the place where new elements are brought forth – elements that do not clearly correspond to a direct translation, but have emerged under the influence of the respective medium. So, the border areas are actually of interest in order to bring up something new or to transform (moving) energies.

Transitions are also one main dramaturgical element with regard to the quality of improvisations. They mark dynamic, moving turning points where something ends and something new begins afterwards. Or the beginning already lies in the end of the old. Bhabha describes this dynamic element of transitions in connection with cultural difference and the productivity of spaces in the in-between of the processual being of culture (Bhabha, 1990, p. 209).

The movers can identify with very different aspects in the improvisation: The space, people in the space, movements, objects or what they hear (and furthermore). The identification is multi-layered and it is mostly not clearly recognisable from the outside and inside what the references consist of. That the references are so difficult to recognise is a point worth mentioning in relation to Bhabha: If the space of movement improvisation is considered as a microcosm of cultural encounter it seems difficult to locate clear references of the movers' identifications when identifications are defined from the outside.

Of course, this can also be seen in terms of classical performative theories. At this point, this consideration shall serve as a burning glass to question one's personal creation of meaning in terms of a critical engagement with cultural attributions.

Bhabha's thoughts on culture (-creation) and the mentioned characteristics such as *hybridity*, *liminality*, dealing with *originality* and *differences* stand in the context of a critique of racism and colonial critique of a Western-oriented one-sided historiography that only functions by omitting many other cultural identities and is therefore incomplete, polarising and discriminatory:

To see the cultural not as the *source* of conflict – *different* cultures – but as the *effect* of discriminatory practises – the production of cultural *differentiation* as signs of authority – changes its value and its rules of recognition (Bhabha, 1994, p. 163).

Concluding questions

The explanations to the following two questions attempt an approach to possibly discriminatory structures within the educational situation of eurhythmics:

1. What student body results from the connectivity of eurhythmics to state music colleges?

2. How is content being handled and how can eurhythmics practitioners' open up to a conscious approach to the cultural differences of their students in the sense of an openness that can negotiate new positions in an honest debate from a decolonising perspective?

1. In Germany sociocultural structures are still very traditional regarding the preferences of consumed music genres. A higher social status is still associated with classical music, a lower with pop music. There is hardly any hybridity of the status groups to be found (see Lehmann/Kopiez, 2018, p. 30). Academics tend to be interested in classical music. Non-academics prefer popular music.¹

Those who study in German music colleges are usually supported by their family background to develop and maintain their specific interest (Dartsch et.al., 2018, p. 140). European associations of higher education agree to open up to genres beyond classical music such as jazz, popular music, world music and local traditional music.² Across Europe, the formation of students has changed due to Erasmus programs within Europe. Europe has also opened for international talented students to be educated in European Music conservatories. On the other hand, the implementation of neo-liberal policies has led to a reduction of general music education for people of the working class or with a minority background "thus turning music education more and more to an endeavour limited to middle- and upper class children" (ibid.).

The specific social class that has access to higher musical education also leads to a lack of representation of the music of the disadvantaged groups in the relevant institutions (ibid., p. 16).

2. Due to the socio-cultural background and the changing but still very pronounced western-oriented education at the conservatories or music colleges, music and styles in music and movement that are derived from a Eurocentric and white USA-oriented frame of reference are preferably treated:

In eurhythmics you will mainly find musicians who have been socialised in the occidental classical and new music and are at home there.

Furthermore, the stigma of the 'inferior' subculture and the ostracism of the supposedly 'primitive' drum set-based rhythm concepts of popular music in contrast to the 'higher-level' rhythms of early and new music may still play a role in an elitist academic environment, even though chairs have long been established at the music colleges for the field of jazz and popular music.³

Steffen-Wittek goes on to ascertain that also in the field of dance and movement there is a missing perception of Afro-American dance arts (see ibid.).

Another example of selective socio-cultural reference is provided by Mariama Diagne. In her article "Second Skin or: Not-Sharing the Share" (Diagne, 2022, pp. 195-211) which ostensibly deals with the dying of ties of Afro-American dancers to achieve a realistic skin colour, she mentions the untold stories of people who do not occur in cultural-historical references or narratives. One example is the avant-garde of postmodern dance around Trisha Brown and Yvonne Rainer, who are fixed terms for American dance history of that time. What other currents existed in the African-American dance community in New York at the same time is usually irrelevant for this historiography, which is common both in the USA and in dance research in Germany (Diagne, 2022, p. 209).

¹ In this source the term *popular music* is not further being differentiated.

² Association Européenne des Conservatoires, Académies de Musique et Musikhochschulen, 2021, p. 15.

³ Steffen-Wittek, 2018 p. 140 (transl. Jenny Ribbat): „In der Rhythmik sind vorwiegend Musiker/innen nötig, die in der abendländisch-klassischen und Neuen Musik sozialisiert wurden und darin zu Hause sind. Ferner mag das Stigma der ‚minderwertigen‘ Subkultur und die Achtung der angeblich ‚primitiven‘ schlagzeugbasierten Rhythmuskonzepte Populärer Musik als Gegensatz zu ‚höherstufigen‘ Rhythmen Alter und Neuer Musik in einem elitären akademischen Umfeld noch immer eine Rolle spielen, auch wenn längst Lehrstühle an Hochschulen für den Bereich des Jazz und der Populären Musik eingerichtet sind.“

But by choosing this point of reference one locates oneself as connected to a particular white US-American Avantgarde of the 1950s. It is a choice and a connection that is being woven and this stabilises a framing in which education takes place.

Another important question regarding the preparation of teaching content, apart from the *omission* just described, is that of *social context*. In naming a strong connection of colonialism and dance research Diagne gives another example:

On the one hand, the academic dance (baroque dance) has not only developed during the Age of Enlightenment, but in the middle of the transatlantic slave trade. Thus, the idea of a free unfolding of a bourgeois society that discovers its individual freedom is undivisibly linked to a systematic deprivation of liberty of humans, who were traded like objects.⁴

This is a clear call that teaching content should not be presented without its broad historical context in terms of decolonising education. The representation and classification that lies within a certain content needs awareness in order to open to the hybridity with exists irrespective of the acknowledgement.

Different times through a musical genre and through the biographies of the moving bodies are present in a current new setting and therefore they have actual relevance and create a present meaning.

By referring to the ongoing slave tribe in the time of the baroque dance in parts of Europe a perspective is being opened that brings to mind people who are commonly not of prior significance for the cultural history of Europe as antagonists or representants in the educational contents of dance education. This reveals a discrepancy of a partly little reflected starting point of pedagogical contents (materials) that leaves colonial structures unmentioned and thus lacks a historical embedding of the political structures under which they emerged.

Further questions

What other conclusions and questions can be drawn for more awareness on a decolonial approach in eurhythmics education?

- Awareness of the representation and classification that lie within being of a particular skin colour, nationality, gender or educational background
- Awareness of the (possibly superior) position due to the passport
- Is there an awareness of the socially and historically-grown attributions to different corporeality among the students or teachers?
- Looking at one's own position: What does the personal educational history enable and what are the opportunities after the graduations?⁵
- Use of teaching materials under recognition of socio-cultural realities, instead of a possibly arbitrary mixing of unquestioned stereotypes in the sensitive field of education
- Allow for different cultural influences: Does one aim to bring students from other cultural backgrounds close to what is common content here or is there a space for cultural differences in all levels of communication in a process of insecurity for all participants by cancelling hierarchies?
- What are the stereotypes that the teacher him/herself associates with a particular culture, race, gender and do they influence the process?

4 Diagne, 2022, p. 196 (transl. Jenny Ribbat): "Zum einen ist der Akademische Tanz (Barocktanz) nicht nur während der Aufklärung, sondern mitten im transatlantischen Sklavenhandel entstanden. Somit ist die Idee einer freien Entfaltung einer ihre individuelle Freiheit gerade entdeckenden bürgerlichen Gesellschaft, untrennbar verknüpft mit der systematischen Freiheitsberaubung von Menschen, die wie Objekte gehandelt wurden."

5 At this point, a current source shows that the elite position of a music pedagogy student does not find a comparable position on the labour market: <https://miz.org/de/dokumente/die-wirtschaftliche-und-soziale-situation-von-vollstaendig-oder-teilweise-freischaffenden-musikpaedagoginnen-sowie-musikerinnen-in-nrw>. Retrived November 13, 2022

- Which options are there to reframe transmitted assumptions?
- By reflecting different positions in a society of inequality: Which frames are supportive for a particular group and exclusionary for another?

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Dialectic Attempts in Artistic Eurhythmics Practice

Towards a notation of spatial qualities through an iterative multi-layered description

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In this contribution we introduce and discuss an iterative descriptive practice for the field of eurhythmics performance research by means of a performative interpretation of the piano etude 'Sur la montagne' by Émile Jaques-Dalcroze. We thereby try to achieve two objectives. On the one hand we would like to add methodological content to this field of research which in this regard is otherwise sparsely populated. On the other hand, we aim to enrich the practice itself. First, we describe the context of this research and discuss a case study on a Dalcroze score with an underlying didactic subject of creating spatiality through phrasing, dynamics and pedalling. Then we outline the iterative descriptive practice through a set of challenges and methodological ingredients. One of these is the pluralistic perspective in the sense of pluralism as a paradigm that favours the co-existence of several opinions versus only a single one. Another one is the cartographic approach connecting multiple threads and cross-references. In both we consider the border crossings between different disciplinary views to be crucial. We conclude with an example of this methodology for the Dalcroze case study.

Dans cette contribution, nous présentons et discutons une pratique descriptive itérative pour le domaine de la recherche sur la rythmique à travers l'interprétation performative de l'étude pour piano « Sur la montagne » d'Émile Jaques-Dalcroze. Nous essayons ainsi d'atteindre deux objectifs. D'une part, nous souhaitons ajouter un contenu méthodologique à ce domaine de recherche qui, à cet égard, est par ailleurs peu peuplé. D'autre part, nous cherchons à enrichir la pratique elle-même. Nous décrivons d'abord le contexte de cette recherche et discutons d'une étude de cas sur une partition de Dalcroze dont le sujet didactique sous-jacent est la création de la spatialité par le phrasé, la dynamique et la pédale. Nous décrivons ensuite la pratique descriptive itérative à travers un ensemble de défis et d'ingrédients méthodologiques. L'une d'entre elles est la perspective pluraliste au sens où le pluralisme est un paradigme qui favorise la coexistence de plusieurs opinions par rapport à une seule. Une autre est l'approche cartographique qui relie de multiples fils et références croisées. Dans les deux cas, nous considérons que le franchissement des frontières entre les différents points de vue disciplinaires est crucial. Nous concluons par un exemple de cette méthodologie pour l'étude de cas Dalcroze.

Introduction

Methodological research for and through artistic practices is crucial for their advancement and enrichment and this is particularly the case for the artistic eurhythmics practice. In the artistic research project "Atlas of Smooth Spaces" (funded by the Austrian Science Fund FWF) we investigate spatial phenomena in the audio-corporeal arts. We seek to notate, create, communicate and eventually compose spatial phenomena. The emphasis lies on spatial qualities rather than metric quantities. Here we pursue a methodological investigation of such spaces in the audio-corporeal practices. These practices share an alertness for and a certain tacit knowledge about space. We are not concerned with the metric properties of spaces but instead with the emergent qualitative spatial qualities of spaces that exist outside of but not without the performer.

As a crucial ingredient for our case study, we have placed the concept of a nullspace. Within the context of such spaces of qualities we define a nullspace as an essential expression or a fundamental attitude within an audio-corporeal artistic practice, much like the baseline model in mathematical statistics. In the following we describe one possible nullspace of artistic eurhythmics research based on a case study of an étude by Jaques-Dalcroze. With this example in mind, we will outline a more general methodology and use this particular case study as an example to explain the methodology.

Case study on the étude 'Sur la montagne – étude d'espace et de jeu de pédale'

The decision to choose this original score from Dalcroze as study work for our nullspace research is on the one hand based on the desire to trace the underlying roots of contemporary eurhythmics practice. On the other hand, this score provides substantial parameters connected to the aspect of space qualities. A few questions guide the experimental case study: what is in the centre of a eurhythmician's artistic routine? How far is music conceptualised as movement in space? How is music being expressed as movement in space and which space concepts are underlying in the music-choreographic formats existing in the realm of eurhythmics (historically, contemporarily)? What role does (kinaesthetic) listening play in this kind of concepts and practices? How does a eurhythmician apply his/her identities as an instrumentalist/ vocalist in a spatial setting and which kind of audio-corporeal expressions are generated by their body archive as mover-instrumentalists? How is space being created through the lense of Dalcroze's musical score 'Sur la montagne - étude d'espace et de jeu de pédale' from the 4th booklet of the '50 etudes miniatures'?¹

As far as the concept of space is concerned, there seems to be no other work by Jaques-Dalcroze in which it explicitly appears in a title.² However, this does not mean that the dimension of space is not present in Dalcroze's other works³ 4. The piece chosen here is supplemented in the subtitle by 'étude d'espace et de jeu de pédale'. Dalcroze obviously points at the varied use of pedal play as a means of expression for spatial sound effects. Not without reason the pedal is often being compared with the natural vibrato of the human voice or the vibrato of string instruments. The piano tone can be shaded in many ways through pedal use. Repertoire study on the piano is therefore indispensably connected with pedal playing and effects (see for example Banowetz, 1992); Dalcroze dedicates one separate subchapter to the pedal technique in his remarks 'La rythmique appliquée à l'étude du piano' (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1918, p. 6-7). The pre-condition for differentiated pedalling is differentiated listening and flexible sensorimotor reaction of the interplaying body parts. A pianist's pedalling is constantly reacting on the piano's and venue's acoustics which in itself is an emergent process. On closer examination of Dalcroze's notation, the composer makes various suggestions for pedalling, alternating finger legato and pedal legato in the legato slurs of the melodic phrases. The pedal entries and exits are precisely notated. Dalcroze seems to be deliberately playing with spatial atmospheres here: sometimes dry, sometimes muted, here dark (in the bass register) and blurred (very long pedal phase), there brilliant and sonorous, sometimes on the border of the audible and porous. The sometimes very long pedal bows require the use of various pedal techniques: half-pedalling or even quarter-pedalling, half-damping, and flutter (surface or vibrato) pedalling which all involve the similar technique of only depressing the pedal, and therefore the foot, a fraction, sometimes as little as an eighth of an inch depending on the piano (see Spanswick, 2015).

Another layer of space can be derived from Dalcroze's very uncommon notational choice of the pitches that run through all registers of the piano: it could also be read as

1 An intention that Jaques-Dalcroze pursued with the composition of the 50 Miniature Etudes may be apparent from the full title: 'Cinquante Etudes Miniatures de Métrique et Rythmique écrites pour le piano à l'usage des petits rythmiciciens ainsi que des enfants et adultes de tout âge n'ayant pas fait d'une étude spéciale de rythmique'. So, there is clearly a didactic intent in his approach and at the same time the pieces, especially the fourth book, can be performed very well in a concert. It is interesting that each piece has a 'picturesque', often humorous title and a subtitle indicating the didactic intention of the musician (many thanks to Mr. Jacques Tchamkerten for providing information on this). Henri Gagnebin's commentary on the '50 Etudes miniatures', found in the collective biography written in 1965 (p. 288): "The title could be misleading and lead one to believe that these are purely technical pieces. These are purely technical pieces, where the author juggles with the most complicated metric combinations. [...] But Jaques-Dalcroze is above all a wry observer of life, of people and their little foibles, a poet who knows how to transform everyday banality into an enchanted world. [...] Each of these studies is a marvel of charm and humour."

2 In the first booklet of the 50 miniature etudes, there is also a 'Study on space and the decomposition of durations' with the title 'A petits pas dans la forêt du mystère' (small steps in the forest of mystery, transl. H.P.).

3 In this context the 16 Plastic Studies (for piano solo but some of them were even orchestrated), which are pieces conceived for Hellerau are of central meaning.

4 Special thanks to Mr. Jacques Tchamkerten – swiss musicologist, organist and ondist – who, as a Dalcroze connaisseur, was so kind to provide information on this.

space chart with all its auxiliary lines (there is a repeated melody lead followed by a big arpeggio ranging from the bass to the treble and therefore requiring notational solutions). In summary, the instrumental interpretation of the piece, as a first examination of the previously posed questions, already allows many spatial projections and spatial movements to take effect on the process of our case study.

After having interpreted and shaped the pianistic expressions of 'Étude d'espace' the next step was to design a movement interpretation as 'plastique animée', being one of the music-choreographic formats existing in the realm of eurhythmics (see 'Le Rythme' 2017 issue on 'l'interprétation corporelle'). The aspects which the movement interpretation is reflecting are manifold: the search movement of the melody (as narrative) in space and analogous to this, searching movements of the gaze, head and torso which lead to shifts in the weight of the pelvis on the piano stool which in turn correspond to shifts in the weight of the fingers in the keys and between the hands on the journey of the wide arpeggios; the 'spontaneous expression of an inner sculpture' (Émile Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921, p. 166) inspired by the sensory spaces the piece creates; the pianist's/ eurhythmician's attitude towards the corporeality and spatiality of the piano and its voice; the movement repertoire of a pianist with its range of functional, expressive and personal vocabulary etc., to name a few.

Challenges and ingredients of the methodology

We propose a set of elements that can be combined into a practice for developing a description that also functions as a notation. These can be read as a recipe, but can also be shuffled or re-interpreted for other purposes. We believe that descriptions of practices in the field of eurhythmics research and more generally in the audio-corporeal artistic practices need to address a series of challenges that are outlined in the following. We henceforth propose methodological ingredients that aim to meet those challenges.

One of the major challenges that a description faces is its dependence on the perception, the language, the idiosyncrasy, the personal history and the constitution of the describer. A trained pianist without exposure to, say, carpentry might for example have a different tactile experience or motor reaction to a performance than a carpenter who at the same time is not a trained pianist. Even any two trained pianists might have different reactions to the same performance. The cultural and language background of the describer factors into this dependence as well. The idiomatic expressions available in certain French dialects yield different descriptions to those that draw from, say, the Baltic languages. Even the physical position of the describer within the context of the performance plays a prominent role as in the description. With this in mind it becomes apparent that any single description of a single describer would be but a brush stroke of the picture that the description ought to be.

This discrepancy can be addressed by superimposing various descriptions, similar to how one would layer brush strokes over another to achieve ever higher depth. This ingredient may be referred to as the *pluralistic perspective*, in the sense that it provides a plurality of descriptions and also in the sense of pluralism as a paradigm that disfavours any single opinion versus the co-existence of several. Adding this ingredient in practice means that there will be multiple describers, each of whom may choose to take multiple perspectives. The performers may be one of the describers and if they are, their contribution should not be weighted more or less than that of the other describers. This does not mean that their role in the performance is disregarded.

Another related challenge is the rigidity, the lack of depth and the coarse granularity that a description may suffer from when it is set in stone once and for all. One may for instance aim to describe a certain spatial atmosphere just before the onset of the first movement. Irrespective of whether it is considered part of the performance or not, there is a great accumulation of expressions, tensions and attentions in this phase. In a first descriptive attempt one of the describers may wish to focus on the geometric arrangement of the

performative space. Suppose the describer later wishes to focus on the luminar qualities of reflections and colour saturation or the flickering atmosphere in space. In a description that is fixed unchangeably, there would be no space for such an addition.

We try to overcome this deficiency by invoking an *iterative methodology*, which we consider to be another ingredient. Each iteration step adds depth and refines the granularity of the former iteration. We distinguish two types of iteration steps, one of which extracts information from the former step and another one that deepens or diversifies the previous description layer. The former type could for instance extract all the information that relates to movement or processes. The latter type typically starts with a question that refines the description. An example would be the question “Which spatial area has the highest amount of tension before the first movement” or “How exactly does the luminar quality change the tension?”. The iterative methodology also plays an important role in the mathematical fields of analysis (Godement, 2004) and in proof theory (Buchholz, Feferman, Pohlers, Sieg; 2006). It is for instance known that any continuous signal can be arbitrarily well approximated by the superposition of sine waves of different frequencies. By adding more and more sine waves of varying frequencies, one may achieve a higher resolution and more fine-grained resemblance of the original signal. One may also distinguish between the qualities of the iteration. The iteration may for instance fail to converge, or it converges in relative terms (so-called Cauchy convergence) or with respect to an absolute objective (so-called absolute convergence), just to name a few examples in mathematical analysis. Iteration is also crucial for induction, a proof method that establishes a consecutive statement based on a previous one resulting in a chain of statements that hold for an ever-greater set of situations.

Arguably one of the pitfalls of descriptions is their intention to establish objectivity where subjectivity and contextuality are needed. What is the movement of an arm outside of its experiential context? A movement could be the determined articulation on a piano in one context for one describer or a mere ornamental gesture in another context for another describer. This issue may be addressed by adding thickness to the description. A *thick description* according to Gilbert Ryle (Ryle, 2009) and Clifford Geertz (Geertz, 2008) creates anecdotal and contextual subjective accounts of an event such as a performance, rather than physical or generally quantitative ones. We consider this as the third ingredient.

Last but not least we would like to raise the issue of linearity and one-dimensionality in descriptions. An audio-corporeal performance may not be captured adequately by chaining together through chronology, through causation or through syllogisms various atomic description segments. Although some of the former ingredients may remedy some of this linearity, we believe that a crucial ingredient is missing, one that itself has many ramifications. This is the ingredient of a diagrammatic and in particular of a *cartographic approach*. Individual descriptions don't stand by themselves in isolation. There can be multiple threads and cross-references amongst them or contexts that connect them. This ingredient is rooted both in the rhizomatic method by Deleuze-Guattari and in cartographic methods, such as the mapping of verbs in the artistic disciplines.



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An iterative procedure

We put these ingredients from the previous methodological excursion into an iterative procedure that attempts to converge to ever higher descriptive resolution:

1. An audio-corporeal artistic practice takes place in time and space. Recordings may additionally be taken of the event.
2. The first iteration consists of a thick description in natural language, formulated freely and without a correcting posture if possible. The focus lays on the spatial qualities that exist through and around the performer. The more describers participate, the more layers and the thicker and more refined the description can become. An empty online canvas can be used as a basis to write the information.
3. In a second iteration each describer extracts their process-related content. We suggest extraction of verbs. They may be plain verbs, but also composite verbs. For instance, “start fishing” could be added as a composite verb. They may also be the verbs from nominalisations. For instance, one could add “shiver” from the nominalisation “the shivering ...”
4. The next iteration step aims at deepening or making more precise the previous description by focusing on another aspect or by raising a specific question. This step can also be added to the canvas. In the next section we discuss a few options for superimposing new descriptions.
5. Once again extracts process-related content such as verbs.
6. The next iteration is optional and may include the creation of new artistic material given the descriptive input from the previous description.
7. Repeat steps 4 and 6.

The four ingredients from the previous section are clearly visible in this approach. The pluralistic perspective profits from a plentitude of contributors. The iterative methodology is encoded in the repetition of the steps. The thick description is a methodology that holds at every iteration level. Finally, the cartographic approach is present in the extraction of verb-content and more importantly in the superposition of the descriptive output on a canvas. There are many ways the output can be presented. We suggest a digital canvas for

its ability to be flexible, which is a key component of the iterative methodology. However, the describers are free to choose their medium.

Example description on a case study

In this section we would like to discuss an example description. We go through each of the steps in the iterative method and explain the choices we made.

In the first step we choose the interpretation of a Dalcroze score as base for the case study. This audio-corporeal practice has been discussed in the previous section. That performance consists of two parts, a pianistic expression of the piece ‘sur la montagne’ and in a second step a movement interpretation. We also chose to record the performance via video and audio. For the second step we initially chose two describers: A eurhythmician and a complexity scientist. The eurhythmician was the performer. The complexity scientist did not have a background in eurhythmics. We also chose to notate our observations digitally. In our cases we wrote down between 500 to 1000 words respectively for this case study. In the third step we extracted the verbs for each description. Then we added a layer of depth by describing more precisely what we had described earlier. For instance, the eurhythmician described the sensation of space in the pianistic execution and by further self-interrogation noticed the correspondence between that sensation and Dalcroze’s choice of notation that she likened to a “space chart” with all its auxiliary lines. The complexity scientist on the other hand focused on the spatial surroundings of the performer before the first movement and noticed in this new round of descriptions that another person was co-creating the space around the performer. The descriptions were written into the same digital canvas. Again, we extracted the verb content to emphasise the process-related aspect of the description. At this stage we were joined by a concert piano technician who added his descriptions from his perspective and from the perspective of the piano. For this round of iterations, we used the recording of the original artistic practice as a mental aid. Subsequently we opted for the creation of another performance that drew upon the descriptive material. In particular we re-staged the first performance, albeit with different spatial surroundings. This optional step can be considered an output of this practice, rather than being part of the description. Finally, we added one more round of iterations where we focused respectively on different aspects. The complexity scientist for instance asked “How much tension does the performer build up in her upper body?”.

In the iterative method we mentioned the liberty of choosing a form of superimposing the descriptions into a description. We have chosen to work on a digital document that allows for re-editing. In the following we describe two formats that we explored, both of which have the additional advantage to yield a visual representation of the interwovenness. The first form uses continuous text with parentheses. Here is an excerpt from the second iteration:

The atmosphere settles, the feathery blanket sinks down (Settle, Sink Down) [P takes a few steps out of the ‘Performance space’ (Take, Step)]

E. puts her fingers to the piano. A wave swings through her arms and leads into the first actuated movement. (Put, Swing, Lead) [E. tilts the head. Turns towards the direction of maximal feedback (Turn Towards)] A wave sweeps through her arms and results in the first actualised movement (Sweep, Result, Actualise) [The hands are folding and the active fingers are articulating themselves on the keys (Fold, Articulate)].

Here we have anonymised the names with P (for person) and E (for eurhythmician). The second form follows a more syntactic approach and uses indentations to facilitate the reading of the description:

```

The atmosphere settles, the feathery blanket sinks down
(Settle, Sink Down)
{
  P takes a few steps out of the 'Performance space'
  (Take, Step)
}

```

```

E. puts her fingers to the piano. A wave swings through her arms and leads into the first
actuated movement.
(Put, Swing, Lead)
{
  E. tilts the head. Turns towards the direction of maximal feedback
  (Tilt, Turn Towards)
}

```

```

A wave sweeps through her arms and results in the first actualised movement
(Sweep, Result, Actualise)
{
  The hands are folding and the active fingers are articulating themselves on the keys
  (Fold, Articulate)
}

```

This latter form is reminiscent of a programming code. It also facilitates the implementation of other digital representations. We chose to fill a digital canvas with the descriptions by superimposing the various multimedia contributions as intertwined texts and representing the depth of the perception through font size. We also drew on the prominent notational work of John Cage's "Lecture on Nothing" (John Cage, 2007).



Online Exposition of the notation through description by Leonhard Horstmeyer and Hanne Pilgrim

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