

The Body, to make and to be in music

A phenomenological study

Johanna Österling Brunström

ABSTRACT

This article aims to explore bodily anchored dimensions of meaning in relation to four different musical contexts. How does the body take hold of the music? How does the music take hold of the body? These questions intersect each other through providing different entry points, which aims to illuminate this phenomenon from different perspectives. Given the fact that these issues are intertwined, they cannot nor should be separated. Instead, they should be understood in light of each other. The questions intersect each other, yet are not identical.

The theoretical foundation is inspired by Maurice Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of the body, along with Frede V. Nielsen's view of music as a universe of meaning, which provides a spectrum of experience possibilities.

Four musical contexts are represented; a professional musician (Astrid, in her 60's), a concertgoer and also a professional composer (Björn, in his 40's), a professional DJ (Celia, in her 30's), and a professional dancer (David, in his 20's). The participants in the study have been observed in their contexts through participatory observations and video observations. The observations took place at an orchestra rehearsal (Astrid), a concert (Björn), a nightclub gig (Celia) and a dance rehearsal (David). The observations were preceded by stimulated recall interviews as well as demi-structured interviews (two interviews per person). The collection of empirical data was concluded by a focus group where all four participants took part.

The voices of the participants are heard through life stories that are built on the conducted interviews. Themes (essences) that describe the bodily anchored dimensions of meaning among the participants have emerged through phenomenologic-hermeneutic readings and analysis of their life stories and interviews. The study indicates that all four musical contexts share the bodily anchored dimensions of meaning, emanating from musical learning and knowledge. The

four contexts also share experiences of the aesthetic, emotional and existential relations to musicking. The room also plays a significant role, together with body and communication.

The musician and the DJ express the dual aspect of the body, e.g. to have and to be in a body, and also the distinction between a professional and a private body. The concertgoer/composer and the musician both highlight how the body can expose the person through stress, nervousness and habitus. The concertgoer/composer also illustrates how language emanates from bodily gestures. When the body takes hold of the music, it occurs through an intentional act, through a reaching out in the world – an act of doing. When the music takes hold of the body, it involves becoming shaken, touched and, without notice, being struck by music – an act of being. Between doing and being, there is a gap – the flesh – that can be understood as our existence.

Keywords: body and music, phenomenology, aesthetic, emotional and existential experience

In the following article I will give an account of my dissertation *The Body, to make and to be in music. A phenomenological study* (Österling Brunström, 2015). The article illuminates the thesis' central parts, including the four musical contexts, theoretical framework, method, results and discussion.

Introduction

At first glance, the body can seem and feel obvious. Our bodies often seem so self-evident that they are taken for granted. Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1908–1961) connects human existence and the body, which means that the body is something absolute, from which one cannot separate: “But [...] I am not in front of my body, I am in it, or rather I am it”, he writes (Merleau-Ponty, 2002: 173). The lived body (*le corps propre*) is the prerequisite to experiencing the world. Instead of the body being reduced to an object, an observable entity or a mechanism consisting chemical processes and causal relationships, humans can be aware of and able to reflect on themselves and their being. The lived body should be understood as an integrated unity as opposed to the commonly discussed polarisation between body and soul/awareness, which is often discussed, not least as a result of language limitations. Instead of speaking about the body and about the soul, phenomenology attempts to allow the world to open up and let the objects speak for themselves.

The body as a starting point for learning appears to have a marginalized place in the school context. I support this statement with how curricula and syllabi for music are designed for primary and lower secondary school (Lpfö 98; Lgr 11) together with the occurrence of subjects and courses at high schools, folk high schools and universities. The marginalized place for the body in music and in a school context is to be understood as a contextualization of this article.

Aims and research questions

The study aims to examine bodily anchored dimensions of meaning in relation to four different musical contextual spaces of music: a professional musician: Astrid (in her 60's), a concertgoer/composer: Björn (in his 40's), a professional DJ: Celia (in her 30's), and a professional dancer: David (in his 20's). The study focuses on these

musical contexts and aims to answer the research questions through the lens of the participants' life worlds.

The main research questions are; 1) *How does the body take hold of the music?* and 2) *How does the music take hold of the body?* These questions intersect each other through providing different entry points, which aims to illuminate this phenomenon from different perspectives. Given the fact that these issues are intertwined and, they cannot be separated, nor should they be. Instead, they should be understood in light of each other. The questions intersect each other, yet are not identical.

Theoretical framework

Phenomenology is a critical reflection of the world, which aims to explore and thematise central philosophical questions. For example, by using philosophy as a discipline when discussing the act of being, we are not only offered arguments for knowledge, but we are also given opportunities to investigate the actual basis for this knowledge and their conditions. Phenomenology is a philosophy that strives towards the naïve contact with the world that can be said to 'already be there', even before reflecting on it (Merleau-Ponty, 2004).

Phenomenology enables phenomena to emerge. In the actual emergence, we can ask questions about how objects (the phenomena) emerge in front of the subjects. Thus, a core theme for phenomenology is the conditions for emergence (Rønholt et al., 2003: 59).

This study uses existential phenomenology and aims to understand the personal existence, by using Merleau-Ponty and his philosophy about the phenomenology of the body. Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology should be understood as a phenomenology focusing on human body and sociality.

Bodily anchored musical meaning

In my research, the understanding of the concept ‘musicking’¹ is based on Nielsen’s (2010) and Merleau-Ponty’s (2002) thinking.

Musicking involves acting and doing which includes playing, singing, listening, dancing, talking about music, composing, improvising, arranging, and the activities that make it possible. Experience of music – musicking – has a bodily point of departure, where body is understood as existence. The lived body means that subjects and objects are intertwined and interconnected (Merleau-Ponty, 1997: 49). The description of musicking in this article incorporates a personal relationship with the music and the participant. Musicking emphasises that music is a human activity and an experience that helps to understand our relationships with other people and ourselves. Participation in music, along with other people, means communication and relationships between individuals, society and the world. This creates meaning.

Musicking means that music takes the starting point in the lived body. Musicking includes all kinds of music activities and provides opportunities for meetings between people as well as between people and surroundings (world). In addition, musicking provides an opportunity for human beings to meet something in oneself, which can give rise to existential meaning.

This article is built on a phenomenological understanding of music (Nielsen, 2010), along with music having a bodily starting point, meaning that human beings are intentionally directed towards music (Merleau-Ponty, 2002).

The concept of habitus can also be useful when exploring how the body can create meaning during musicking. Habitus should be understood in terms of an individual’s positions for action and can manifest through expressions of preference, how a person speaks and acts (Bourdieu, 1994). Bourdieu’s understanding of the concept of habitus is in line with a phenomenological explanation. Habitus is embodied taste, style and habit, which manifest itself in action dispositions and historical dispositions that

1 Christopher Smalls (1998) discussion of musicking is not fully consistent with a phenomenological understanding. Small are interested in why people participate in a musical contexts, while a phenomenological approach rather want to understand how this happens and what one want to participate in, based on the individual’s lived body. Small points out that the meaning of music is not found in the sounds, but in the relationship between the people who in some way engage in music. A phenomenological approach however focuses on the relationship between humans and music and the way in which the subject and object are intertwined with each other.

affect future choices and actions. Taste for, for example, art, music, literature and food expresses the individual's habitus, which means that you know how to act in the social field. Taste, language, education and lifestyle are fields that are all affected by habitus, which lead to reproduction, as our habitus determines how to adapt to the environment. Habitus can be understood as an individual's disposition for action and an individual's habitus may show up in different taste expressions, as well as how the person speaks and acts – simply an embodied class expression.

Method

In order to uncover, illuminate and become aware of bodily anchored dimensions of meaning in relation to the four mentioned musical contexts, I selected a phenomenological approach since phenomenology is the theory of what emerges. Experience and meaning are central concepts within the phenomenological philosophy, however this does not mean that we have always dressed phenomena in words. Instead, the phenomena are mainly perceived as 'lived'. Through language, we can understand and uncover concepts and experiences, but phenomenology can also uncover meanings in pre-language contexts through bodily expressions and through perceptions (Keller, 2012: 12). The phenomenological reflection is an activity, bodily anchored in the world. This reflection means that we should understand ourselves while we live our lives. We should thus reflect upon the world in which we already live, and in addition take history into account. Merleau-Ponty argues that there is a lived connection between body and world where our perception is the basis for an open dialogue (Thøgersen, 2010: 128).

The descriptive approach of phenomenology operates methodologically together with understanding, explanation and interpretation as per hermeneutics. Whereas a phenomenological analysis aims to describe an essential structure of a phenomenon, hermeneutic analysis focuses on interpretation. Phenomenology emphasises the fact that humans exist in the world (being-to-the world), which means that meaning is conveyed through language, culture and history. In order to be able to understand and create meaning, experiences of reality need to be explained and interpreted. Existential hermeneutics aim to penetrate and understand the human world through a thorough analysis of the conditions for human existence (Ödman, 2007: 42).

Reduction, construction and destruction

The study uses the analysis methods of *reduction*, *construction* and *destruction*, derived from Heidegger (1982: 23). Reduction means “leading back” and thematising a phenomenon in a way that shows its central aspects, and involves analysing and uncovering. Reduction is a central phenomenological method, yet it is also a method which demands that we become surprised and baffled through detaching ourselves from what is well-known; it is a method that encourages us to see the world with fresh eyes. The phenomenological reduction starts from the basis of the dual aspect of intentionality; for something to appear it must appear to someone, as something. The central aspect in this study is, in other words, how the phenomenon appears to the subject. This act highlights aspects of meaning that are expressed by and with the lived body (Merleau-Ponty: 1997).

In order for something to appear, I (the researcher) have to engage in this process. This is what Heidegger calls construction: “we should bring ourselves forward positively toward being itself” (Heidegger, 1982: 21). I participate in the research process, and my preconceived ideas and understanding are therefore significant. This means I have to become aware of my position and my starting point. Understanding is the basis for interpretation and it constitutes our being-in-the-world. Understanding points towards the future, yet at the same time sets off in the now and the present situation.

Heidegger’s third step is called destruction and is described as “a critical process in which the traditional concepts, which at first must necessarily be employed, are deconstructed down to the sources from which they were drawn” (Heidegger, 1982: 23). Destruction aims to thematise prevailing opinions in order to dig down to the roots and, in doing so, find new and wider opportunities to understand concepts (Keller, 2012: 25). When a traditional concept is being destructed, it is possible to bring it back to its historical repetition of tradition. To *destruct* means to analyse and critically inspect something in order to create a new understanding of a concept.

In existential phenomenology, reduction, construction and destruction are important tools for reflection and analysis; regardless of how much emphasis a study may place on one or several of the methods, and regardless of whether any of the methods should be viewed as implied or explicit. The three methods should be understood as included in a circular fashion, similar to the hermeneutical spiral. Phenomenology and hermeneutics should be understood as ontological starting points, where the hermeneutical emphasis rests upon an epistemological foundation. In other words,

phenomenology describes our being-in-the-world as humans, whereas hermeneutics helps us to understand how this happens by a methodical reflection through understanding, explanation and interpretation.

Selection

Participants

I wanted to avoid a so-called traditional understanding of the musician and instead broaden the understanding of the musician (and music). A widespread understanding of the concept *music* means that everyone who in one way or another lives, engages, thinks, speaks, knows music and makes music are included in the concept, which means a broader understanding that gives the study a solid foundation to explore the various intentional acts aimed at the phenomenon.

The following four *lifeworld existentials* have played a decisive role in selecting participants in the study: lived body, lived time, lived space and lived human relations (Van Manen, 1990: 101 ff). Listed themes can be differentiated, but not separated, and should be understood as existential themes that all individuals face when they experience the world: “The four fundamental existentials of spatiality, corporeality, temporality, and rationality may be seen to belong to the existential ground by which all human beings experience the world, although not all in the same modality of course” (Ibid.: 102).

In order to get in touch with the participants who were desirable for the study, I turned to two people in my network of former and current students, students and colleagues.

The selection criteria for participants was inspired by a body phenomenological approach (Merleau-Ponty, 2002; Merleau-Ponty, 1968), music perceived as a universe of meaning (Nielsen 2010) and lifeworld existentials (van Manen, 1990). This involves a widened concept of music and musicians, viewed from a body phenomenological perspective, with the ultimate aim to grasp and illuminate the research questions.

Empirical methods

Through learning about peoples’ lived experiences, there are opportunities to access deeper meaning of human experience. The choice of research methods comes from

the aims of answering the research questions, as well as being able to describe and interpret the phenomenon in multiple ways.

In order to portrait how the participants described the phenomenon, I deemed it crucial to use research methods that utilise their own descriptions of experiences and reflections of the phenomenon. For this purpose, I chose observations ('on-site' and video), stimulated recall interviews (Gass & Mackey, 2009; Haglund, 2003), semi-structured interviews (Kvale, 1997) and focus groups (Wibeck, 2009), given that a phenomenological account has a reflecting approach.

Data collection and analysis

Life world phenomena are often complex and rational, embedded into the flesh of the world (Dahlberg et al., 2008: 233). In order to understand these phenomena, I as a researcher must reduce, organise and clarify the picture that emerges, since a phenomenological-hermeneutical methodology emphasises both description and interpretation (Ibid.).

The data collection began with observations of the participants in their everyday lives (an orchestra rehearsal, a concert, a nigh-club gig and a dance rehearsal). The observations ('on-site' and video) aimed to give an insight into the life worlds of the participants. Through observing the participants in their everyday lives and in their work contexts, opportunities were given to "come close".

Each observation lasted for approximately 60 minutes. Descriptive notes were gathered during the observations, as thorough as was possible at the time, with the aim to register as much as possible through keeping an open mind to what was being observed.

Before the participants and I simultaneously viewed the video recordings together from each observation, I had repeatedly studied these video recordings and made descriptive notes as well as reflecting through doing a structure analysis (Holgersen, 2012). I observed how the body and music, and music and body interacted with each other. Everything that I could observe was noted down as thorough as possible, with the aim to uncover the current phenomenon (reduction). I also searched for elements in the video that had not emerged during the on-site observations.

The first stimulated recall interview focused on what the participants saw and experienced when they watched the video from the observation. This meant that they put

into words what they remembered of the experience they had in precisely the moment of the recording, but they also expressed in words the emotions and experiences they had when watching the video.

For interview number two, I had prepared questions that were based on the first interview. Through asking these questions, I wanted to get closer to the phenomenon. The answers from the participants enabled the phenomenon to develop, take shape and come to light.

Yet again, I focused on interview transcriptions and this time I read through them with the aim to bring forward each participant's life story. The aim of the life stories was to obtain access to the four participants' meaning creation of their bodies while musicking. During the analysis of the data, participants were able to read their life stories and were asked to critically reflect, examine, correct and change anything they felt I had misunderstood or misinterpreted.

Next step in the process of analysis involved reading the texts again with openness, thoughtfulness and conscientiousness, in order to enable a new understanding of the data as a whole. In the texts, I underlined what I argue are aspects of meaning. Those that belonged together were brought into clusters of meaning (reduction and construction). The clusters formed a basis for structures of meaning – themes (essences). A hermeneutic approach involves “interpreting” and “understanding” (Ricoeur, 1993: 75; Ödman, 2007: 23–24). I have interpreted and understood the texts and I have thereby selected titles for these themes. Some themes are similar (i.e., can be found in several participants' texts), but are not identical and have therefore been given different names to highlight the similarity but also the fact that they are slightly different. Thereafter, these themes have been inspected from different angles through theoretical discussions, with the aim to understand, explain and raise them to a more abstract level, but also to critically examine and analyse traditional views to enable an increased understanding of the concepts (destruction).

Finally, the themes (essences) have been compared with the aim to investigate similar and dissimilar features of their professional practice as a musician, concertgoer/composer, DJ and dancer. This should be understood as a part of the reduction, in synergy with construction and destruction (Heidegger, 1982) – and in this way, the research questions of my project are being addressed.

Results

Astrid's, Björn's, Celia's och David's life stories have been developed through their interviews. Their statements are presented through interview transcriptions from stimulated recall interviews and the subsequent interviews have been adapted to running text in the subject form. The life stories aim to highlight as well as enable the emergence of participants' meaning creation of their bodies while musicking. The life stories illuminate how participants perceive bodily meaning when musicking. Participants' own expressions and words have been used as much as possible, gathered from the interview transcriptions. I have made minor changes in order to improve accessibility and clarity, but this has included a great deal of respect for their own statements. I have deemed it important to allow their own voices, expressions and nuances to come to the forth, in order to create a personal tone that can define and make each participant visible. This personal starting point and their own perception of the world are crucial to their stories, and they reflect personal and subjective acts of doing and being.

The following themes represent and illuminate each musical context:

Astrid's experiences of her body when musicking as a *musician* can be expressed as:

- *Knowledge, routines and habits*: Astrid's extensive experience and knowledge is integrated in her body. Habits are shaped and her cello becomes an extension of Astrid's body.
- *To have and to be a body*: There is a gap between the private and the social body, between the spontaneous and the calculating, between the phenomenal and the objective, and between the wild and the controlling body.
- *Nervousness and body*: Nervousness and stress create a space between the cello and Astrid, which also reflects the relationship between having and being a body.
- *Existential experiences in music*: When her cello playing is being made impossible because of physical injuries, this rocks Astrid's existence.
- *Relations and communication*: Communication happens on several levels in the orchestra: it can be silent, verbal, or physical where minor expressions can become very significant.
- *The room*: Astrid creates a room for herself through her habits, which becomes a room of meaning.

Björn's experiences of his body when musicking as a *concertgoer/composer* can be expressed as:

- *Early beginnings – long experience:* Björn's knowledge is based on experiences from early childhood; his skills are embodied and his familiarity deep within many areas of music.
- *Experiences in music:* Aesthetic experiences of music, Emotional experiences in music, Existential experiences in music: Björn experiences music with his body. The music touches his body and also has an opportunity to act in the touched body. Björn encounters himself in the music, which gives him bodily reactions.
- *Relations and approaches:* The room, The orchestra, The conductor, The administration and performing musicians: Björn expresses different battles played out on different fields. The different individuals' positions for action, or habitus, are taught and coloured by upbringing and social environment.
- *Music and language:* Björn argues that music can communicate aspects he has not always verbalised. However, his language is embodied and it perfects Björn's thoughts.

Celia's experience of her body when musicking as a *DJ* can be expressed as:

- *Emotion, experience and knowledge:* Through Celia's experience of listening, seeing and feeling, she knows what music she should play for the dance floor.
- *Experience of, with and in music:* Music is a way for Celia to get close to herself, experience herself together with her thoughts and emotions.
- *Communication and interaction:* Celia can direct her attention towards the audience as a kind of sonar. She gauges the audience with her body and perception.
- *Her own body in movement to the music:* Celia expresses music through dance and her body focuses outwards into the room, towards the audience in order to give energy, but she can also approach music with serenity. She focuses inwards, on her own experience, by listening and feeling.

David's experience of the body when musicking as a *dancer* can be expressed as:

- *Knowledge and learning:* David uses his body to invite the world, experiences and events. When a habit is formed, David's existence is being widened.
- *Perception – to perceive and to be perceived:* David feels his body and he feels with his body. David creates music with his body and can at the same time experience music in and with his body.
- *Flow:* In flow situations, something immediate arises, and the body articulates itself and follows the music. Flow involves an experience of presence in the now.

- *In the zone – between-substantiality*: Through David's intentional act and inter-subjective co-creation, he experiences music as meaningful. He experiences emotions in the shape of strong emotional expressions together with existential experiences that concern life matters.
- *Conversation – communication*: David, the music, and his colleagues, meet in movement, which means interaction and communication.

The study shows that all four musical contexts share the bodily anchored dimension of meaning that starts with *learning* in music. The four contexts also have *aesthetic*, *emotional* and *existential experiences* in relation to musicking in common. The *room* plays a significant role for musicking in the four contexts, coupled with body and *communication*. The musician and the DJ also expressed the notion of the *dual aspect* of the body; e.g., to have and to be in a body, the professional and the private body. The concertgoer/composer and the musician both highlight how the body can expose them through *stress*, *nervousness* and *habitus*. In addition, the concertgoer/composer illuminates that *language* emerges from a bodily gesture.

How does the body take hold of the music? How does the music take hold of the body?

Doing something through music means taking a direction, that I want something. This happens through intentionality. I reach towards music, if only through thoughts, and it creates a movement. My ear is drawn to a sound, curiously listening out for tones, sounds, colours, shapes and emotions. My eye reaches towards the sound in the room, my eyes are listening in the same way as my ears see. Movements and bodies make sounds. My hand strives and wants to reach the instrument, the pen, the Hi-Fi equipment, the conductor baton, the notation sheet. I want to feel, experience and be touched. I take hold of the music and my body through an intentional act, and the music reaches towards me. To take hold of or to be taken hold of, pairing, amalgamating without being able to incorporate fully with the one or the other. Close, but with a gap in between. Making sense, the understanding, the increased knowledge, what the body has taken hold of – all creates meaning (Merleau-Ponty, 2002). An act of doing in music – to be musicking – means an act of meaning creation. Music and body are not separate, body is music and music is body. Music and body meets in the flesh. The body takes hold of the music. The music takes hold of the body.

Aesthetic, emotional and existential experiences create change. Chills sweep over my back, I sweat, I freeze, want to cry, laugh, my pulse races and then slows down. Being

affected by music generates emotions, thoughts, perceptions and experiences that are not possible without music. Music has the ability to strike a person with immediacy and directness (cf. Vetlesen, 2004; Nielsen, 2010; Pio & Varkøy, 2012; Varkøy & Westby, 2014; Varkøy, 2015;). Music comes to me and I come to the music, the music expresses itself and I express myself. In music, I meet myself and find myself exposed. When the music takes hold of me, it happens beyond my will and intention. To be shaken, moved and aroused by music means a break with habits, what is expected and what is rehearsed. Being affected by music is an experience that strikes and breaks into everyday life, something that the subject cannot control or anticipate. It just happens. Suddenly and without any warning, I am reminded of life and my vulnerability, mortality and existential loneliness. Conditions that we have been given, conditions that cannot be chosen or, for that matter, removed. To be affected by music means that boundaries of what it means to be a person in the world emerge. To be affected by music affects our being-to-the-world. Music opens doors for our acts of being. Acts of being in music creates meaning. The body takes hold of the music. The music takes hold of the body.

This study is based on the understanding of us human beings as bodily beings-to-the world, which highlights a philosophical position where the body is understood from a holistic perspective. The lived body, *le corps propre*, is an irreducible unity and instead of making a distinction between body and thought, the body experiences, feels, reflects and exists. Between doing and being, there is a gap – the flesh – which is the foundation for the area of contention that can be called existence.

Discussion

Through Bourdieu's concept of fields, the empirical data can be moved from the personal and subjective experience to a more structural level, which gives this study validity and credibility. A field can be understood as a kind of battlefield, a place where battles are fought and won (Bourdieu, 2000). A field is also characterised by how a group of people are united through common interests and values, as well as social, economical and cultural capital. Different fields can interact and interplay with each other, and at the same time be hierarchically organised. The concept of fields gives an opportunity for personal and subjective perspectives to arise and indicate how structures function.

The discussion chapter in my thesis is structured according to three fields: *The body as a field*, *The emotional, existential and aesthetic field*, and *The field of knowledge and learning*. The three fields emanate from the study in this article and address the ontological premises arguing that we are to the world with our bodies, and that we meet the world with our bodies.

The body as a field

The body holds a capital that expresses itself in clothing, style, language use and posture (Bourdieu, 1993). The body, characterized by habitus, can thus be understood as a kind of status symbol or class indicator, just like the right residential areas, the prestigious cars and the popular brands that signal taste distinctions (Ibid.: 250). The body's habitus can be displayed and assessed. The body's habitus cannot be hidden when the body is marked by habits and dispositions. Habits that are embodied and sedimented. I may feel uncomfortable when I do not know how to act, as well as I feel "at home" when I know how to behave. How do I act when I visit a concert? How should I get dressed? When do I clap? Björn's bodily disposition consists in that he is used to different concert environments. He knows how to behave in a jazz club as well as in a concert hall. This makes him safe, which can also be read in his body. His action pattern shows embodied habits. Just like Astrid's body shows security in the orchestra situation. Her long experience is evident in the way she inhabits the room of the orchestra. However, her body shows one kind of bodily disposition, while the concertmaster and conductor exhibits other types of action dispositions. These dispositions show different degrees of power and influence in the orchestra. This can be read in their bodies. Their bodies clearly show embodied and sedated habits. In the dj-booth is Celia who, with authority, leads the evening and the dance floor in interaction with the guests. Her body shows her dispositions and history, her style and influence. When David is warming up his body, old habits are made visible. When the room is filled with dance, David's body shows another habitus. The careful and sensitive may instead make way for the distinct and direct. David's body fills the room.

Four different people, four different lives, four different habitus.

The emotional, existential and aesthetic field

This field has its starting point in the perceptual and expressive, together with what is experienced as aesthetical, emotional and existential. The relation to music is described as sensual and emotional. The body senses and is sensing. The body is

giving rise to an experience of meaning and existential experiences. The aesthetic, emotional and existential experiences are not identical, but should be understood as closely linked, although in certain contexts the perspectives may need to be separated. Nielsen believes that the aesthetic experience is a basic condition for human beings' existences (Nielsen, 2010: 142). I argue that the existential experience is central to our experience in and through music, based on the conducted research.

Music and body, body and music cross each other (chiasm). Intentionality extends between body and music: the bodily and carnal intentionality structures time and space, together with physical things and social fields, as well as different forms of human identity (Keller, 2012: 268). The densification between body and music, the flesh, describes how the world is connected, comparable with how my own experience is intertwined with the experiences of others.

Music is not a thing; music is something that people make together. Music is something that happens between human beings. Music is the meeting between people (Varkøy, 2014: 45). To meet music means to meet myself. The participants in the study express how they meet the music and how the music meets them; they describe how the body grabs the music and how the music grabs the body. The participants describe existential experiences where life's difficult, beautiful, important and vital moments can be perceived. Deep and revolutionary experiences of purification, redemption and letting go. Experiences to long and strive for. Experiences of being affected. Experiences of meaning. The participants also express how the emotional and sensuous / aesthetic experience open up opportunities to act out and let themselves be awashed with emotions. A meeting between human beings and music is often strong and cataclysmic.

The field of knowledge and learning

Initially, the relevance of the project was highlighted using a description of the body's marginalised position in the school context. The purpose of reconnecting with school is to show how this research can contribute with questions to the school context, and to point forward toward to further research.

The discussion about tacit and suppressed knowledge is old, but I think it is extremely adequate even today. Such an argument is based on Astrid's, Björn's, Celia's and David's experiences of learning, knowledge, familiarity and reflection. All the assessments and choices that they make are intertwined with the grip, the gaze, the foot, the listening, which rest in experience and knowledge. Their knowledge is basically tacit, but

through the act and understanding, which in some form are tacit, they give meaning to the words (Polanyi, 2013; Molander, 1996). However, science is characterised by verbalisation and theorisation and they create a field of tension. How does the body fit into the syllabi of music? What place does the body have in the school world and in the music subject? How should these competencies be evaluated, assessed and rated if they are tacit? They take time to express, reflect and put into action. How does it rely on the requirement of efficiency and objectivity? In order to understand how questions, tensions or cracks occur, construct, shape and generate in the field, it is crucial to think relationally. What forces, structures and mechanisms help to shape the field? The field of knowledge and education is a place for fights between different groups: children/students, custodians, teachers, school staff, school leadership, politicians, the EU, researchers, together with different positions and views. The relation between the different groups becomes crucial for what will happen (Krüger, 2001: 25). I wonder: what place does the living body have in the education context? Is the lived body muted?

A phenomenological understanding of the body is difficult to assert when the body meets school. But on the dance floor, in the concert hall, with the instrument and inside the cypher, the body exists. The body can and should take its place. The body is the starting point for sensations, experiences, reflections, thoughts and questions. Meeting music at school and outside school creates a field of tension, a kind of gap or slip – the flesh. I request a discussion about the meaning of music, a discussion based on an aesthetic, emotional and existential basis. A discussion that primarily deals with the content: *what* is music? *Why* music and *why* should we have music at school? – Instead of a discussion that (too often) deals with how-to-matter.

Finally

I call for a philosophical discussion that takes its starting point in the lived body. An in-depth philosophical discussion that raises questions about music, body, learning, knowledge and human beings in relation to the aesthetic, emotional and existential experience. A discussion that not only results in spoken or written words *about* the philosophical questions, but in a practicing philosophy with a lived perspective. A making and doing in music on the basis of the lived body.

References

Litteratur

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Seminar

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Fil dr

Johanna Österling Brunström
Malmtorgsgatan 22, 653 40 Karlstad, Sverige
johanna@artexista.se
+46-(0)709-96 77 43

Appendix

Interview questions

- “relate modes of expression to various genres and musical epochs” (LK06) – how does one assess this?
- What are your thoughts on the composer’s intention vs the performer’s intention?
- “perform musical content with their own personal form of expression” (LK06) – how does one assess this?
- “improvisation” (LK06) – how does one assess this?
- When a student presents self-composed music, how does one assess the performance?
- What are your thoughts on assessment expertise over time?
- What role does teachers’ knowledge of the genre have in assessment?
- What role does teachers’ knowledge of the repertoire have in assessment?
- Do teachers need exemplars for standards of differentiated goal attainment?
- What characterizes a performance at a high level?
- Assessment in teams – are there advantages/disadvantages?
- If we were not required to give grades for performance, how would we undertake assessment?