Editorial: Music in Time, Music in Space

This issue of Volume 9 of *Culture and Dialogue* on the theme of “Culture, Music and Dialogue” highlights an aspect of sense-experience that this Journal holds dear: the relational nature of practice and perception through the medium of art. The issue focuses on one of the most universal forms of expression, music. Everyone, everywhere, has experienced music in one way or another, for better or for worse, from the composer, musician, or performer, to the one who knows how to listen, not only to human fellows’ complex and subtle compositions and performances but also to the sounds of birds or insects, or wind in trees, shifting thus the musical intention to the side of the listener; or, simply, to the one humming or whistling a little tune to enjoy an inner state of musicality of (relative) universal value. That music has something to say whether through its aesthetic form, quasi-mathematical dimension, or cultural texture is an evidence. This, however, is no suggestion that music should be treated as a “language” understood as “instrumental means to convey concepts,” or even less as an “utilitarian mode of expression.” Even in its most ideological form such as anthems or military marches music remains singularly “ineffable,” as Jankélévitch famously put it. We may argue that the ineffable typifies all other artistic sense experiences, whether visual, gustative, haptic, or olfactive. Certainly, but not in the same way. Even when keeping in mind the natural synaesthetic nature of such experiences, each sense organ contributes to shaping our intuition of spatiality and temporality in its own way. We may argue that temporality in itself, that intuited *élan* we feel all the time to use Bergson’s conception, is essentially the same for all sense experiences. What varies is the mode of spatialisation, precisely what makes us realise concretely that time has passed, is passing, or will come. This applies to any acoustic formations. Sounds and how they relate to each other as well as to other entities such as places, cultures, histories and so on spatialise temporality to make it a conscious experience in a way colours, surfaces, or smells don’t regardless of their relational nature. But this is no suggestion either that acoustic experience (whether musical or not) can be reduced to mere spatialisation of temporality. There is more than spatialised and therefore identifiable entities in acoustic configurations. What is also inherently experienced is the *je ne sais quoi* of that intuited *élan*; what is experienced, then, is the co-dependent nature of spatialisation and temporality. Music as a special kind of acoustic configuration intends through the

composer, performer, or listener to bring on with its own discrete devices this very co-dependency, with an array of forms, combinations, variations, repetitions, flections, extensions, dynamics and so on. Music makes, in its own way, the co-dependency between temporality and spatialisation manifest. And when the musical configuration is experienced as such, we begin to feel the discreet charm of pleasure, which can also be negative, mental, or disruptive – but still pleasure.

Contributors to this issue have in very different ways reflected on the nature of musical experience. Eske Tsugami invites us to discover (or rediscover) sixteenth century scholar of music Girolamo Mei (1519–1594) and the aesthetic significance of his interpretation of tragic *Katharsis*. Lisa Giombini reflects on the relevance of “ontological” accounts of music in the light of more “historical” approaches and explores instead the possibility of a “historical ontology” of music. Abir Marsit brings us into the worlds of danse and calligraphy by showing how particular artists have developed a singular creative force by addressing “prohibition” in their own cultural contexts. Eric Nsuh Zuhmboshi analyses links between musical art and law through the example of the ethical humanism of South African reggae musician Lucky Philip Dube (1964–2007). Kathrin Engelskircher offers a reflection on the “translatorial” nature of music, and pop music in particular, as evidenced in the way Spanish-Chilean band the Recalls reprocessed the Beatles’ legacy. Anna Masliakova describes, with Raphael’s “School of Athens” as trigger point, instances of relationality and synaesthesia among cultural practices throughout history and within which music finds itself. Finally, Robert Clarke proposes critical reviews of two books recently published on music: Sarah Hickmott’s *Music, Philosophy and Gender in Nancy, Lacoue-Labarthe, Badiou* and Gary Peters’ *Improvising Improvisation: From Out of Philosophy, Music, Dance and Literature*.

I would like to thank, on behalf of our editorial team, all the contributors to this issue on “culture, music and dialogue” as well as our members who keep supporting the Journal and, needless to say, our publisher Brill.

The theme of the next issue of *Culture and Dialogue* (Vol. 9.2) will be “French Thought in Dialogue.” The journey carries on, to see everything anew, to start all over again.

Gerald Cipriani

Un furieux désir de vivre, de tout revoir, de tout recommencer, de tout refaire, la souleva subitement. C’était une révolte en face de la mort ...

PIERRE LOUÏS, Aphrodite