

## **Musical composition as basis for working with dance, performance, text and sound.**

Research #42

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The research "Musical composition as basis for working with dance, performance, text and sound" is based on study of sheet music by J.S.Bach "Concerto No. 1 in D minor, BWV 1052 for Harpsichord and strings" in multiple contexts. Specifically, in the context of movement, performance, script, sound and its interpretations in contemporary dance. With this particular musical composition, we read and analyzed its graphical record, formal and composition parameters, interpretation principles and aesthetics that were embedded in this work. The intention was to transfer such processes into movement scores and express them physically. We were aided by another work by J.S.Bach "Musical Offering", where Bach methodically explained some of his compositional approaches. In addition to our on-site work with dancers and actors, together with the musicologist and musician Marek Žoffaj, we contextualized historical and musical paradigm in which J. S. Bach composed, intertwined with context of psychoacoustic principles of musical perception. Research took part in blocks (residencies in Slovakia, Czech Republic and Germany) between 2020 - 2022.

In 2022 I received scholarship for research from NRW KULTUR Sekretariat. My Tanzrecherche #42 was divided into 2 periods: June 2022 as a group residency and October-November 2022 as a solo residency. Each period lasted for 3 weeks. Both research phases were done in Quartier am Hafen, Cologne, Germany. During the first research phase, I collaborated with dancers Douglas Bateman and Adam Ster. Second research phase I finished topic and presented outcomes of the whole research under the title "All-inclusive 1052 prototype" during Museumsnacht in Cologne.

All inclusive 1052 prototype consists of:

1) performative lectures on the research: "multilayers of composition"

2) dance part: using principles of falling, reverse falling, reverse movement combined with the material from 1st part (multilayers of composition) in correlation with the 3rd part of Concerto D minor Allegro (J. S. Bach).

Since my artwork has been strongly reeling off music, sound or a particular musical score, I had a need to understand the language of music in a way that it enables communication between a choreographer, a musician and dancers in a creative process. Relevance is put on transformation of the material in a way that has its origin, abbreviations, transformation, and different levels of abstraction. My fascination with Bach's work arose from the acknowledgement that simple movement score can be almost countlessly recycled and hence transformed into complexity. I was motivated by compositional economy and usage of variety of tools, built from bottom up in a multilayer composition in Bach's work.

Thanks to NRW Tanzrecherche scholarship I could work with experienced dance artist who gave me great insight and reflection on the work. Thanks to the synergy of NRW scholarship and the

residency at Quartier am Hafen I could develop and present my work to public. I visited J.S.Bach's archive in Leipzig and got an overview of his vast and fertile artistic life and thriving spirit. I have recognized tools through which I can work with material on an advanced level.

The creative process is an open source process - full of thoughts, movement, ideas, possibilities, it catalyzes a variety of unconscious or subconscious content of artists involved. With those tools I feel empowered to lead semi large production (5 and more people on the stage). These tools might also be helpful to clarify the intent and hammer out the agreement between everyone involved.

In summary, my vision for 2023 is to create a new piece based on Concerto D minor BWV1052 in which I will be working with 5 dancers and 5 musicians with polyphony of voices.

During TANZRECHERCHE in Quartier am Hafen, Cologne I was occupied by these **QUESTIONS**:

***- How to use physical language to articulate particular musical composition of J.S.Bach?***

Basically: What is the source material? We've analyzed the composition and translated it into physical language, we have started with simple movement phrase - e.g. 6 movements or 12 movements and by using parameters (see below) we ended up with a significantly complex material.

***- Are certain dance techniques (contemporary, classical, neoclassical) more accurate for articulation of particular musical composition of J.S.Bach?***

I would like to do more research on this topic. Until now, the question of accuracy for certain dance technique seemed to be irrelevant. The clarity of the performed material seems to be more relevant than accuracy of technique.

***- What are parameters of this particular Bach's composition?***

**I. TIME:** Tempo/Meter/Pulsation, Rhythm/Rhythmical patterns

**II. SPACE:** Horizontal/Vertical, Volume / Range of motion, Quality of movement, Accents, Direction/ Pathways

**III. DYNAMIC:** Transformation of material through:

- Speed / spectrum between fast-slow
- Volume / spectrum between big-small
- Intensity / spectrum between tension-release
- Repetition
- Permutation / changing order
- Modulation / changing levels
- Transposition - changing of levels - spectrum between vertical- horizontal or back-forth

**IV. POLYPHONY** (exists only with 2 and more voices, bodies, instruments):

- Chords and counterpoints
- Solo, canon, chaos
- Dissonance/Consonance
- Mirroring/ the same material in opposition
- Backward movement

**V. THEME /NARRATIVE** and visualization are based on a free flow of thoughts or decisions.

When I talk about multilayers of composition, means that it emerges from these parameters.

***- Can Bach's compositional unity be roomed into a body? What are the possibilities and limitations?***

Rooming compositional unity within a body is a long process. In this research, together with dancers, we started working in silence and first of all created our own metronome within body in order to keep the material compact, sustainable for a longer period of time. Then we have progressively added parameters, layer after layer. Dancers are so used to dancing to music rather than creating music within the body. At the beginning it was rigid, but after some time the body embodied the metronome and started to play with material on more profound level.

***-What are prerequisites to experience Bach's absolute compositional unity by listening and observing body as counterpoint at the same time?***

Ability to abstract our thoughts, lets them flow towards the unknown and the ability to create our own image. I do not know, let's see how public will perceive our future stage work.

***- How was body and music perceived in this transitional paradigm (between renaissance and baroque) era? How is are the body and music perceived in the contemporary art? Is there any correlation? If so, what is it?***

This topic is still in progress.

More info about work:

<https://envorentoe.com/art/musical-scores/>