Part 6: Researching Creativities—Chapter 6.37

Making silence matter: Rethinking performance creativity as a catalysing space for sounding oneself in music education

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Abstract

This chapter critically engages with issues of how silence is manifest in musical performance creativity. Challenging the *tacet* perspective, the binary approach that sees silence as an absence of sound, we view silence as a material practice, a purposive performative act. The temporal intervals which separate sounds entail choices that are governed by both intention and intuition. In making these choices performers reveal their creative and authorial expressive voice. This chapter demonstrates the rich and complex relationship between silence and sound in music, drawing on examples from a broad range of cultural contexts. Two specific viewpoints are explored in detail: the conceptual perspective of John Cage and the practice-based perspective of jazz drummer John Stevens. These contrasting positions lead to a rethinking of the materiality of silence and how the body *sounding oneself as a technology of performance creativity* should be scripted into more responsive practices of music education.

Keywords: performance creativity, silence, musical materiality, sounding oneself, John Cage, John Stevens

Introducing the Salience of Silence

What if we saw the performance of silence – whether on the page or between sounds – as a performative space? What if silence itself becomes a space of performance and the sounds become spaces in which bodies move and things come alive with meaning (and mean differently)? What if silence is much more than the simple absence of sound but rather part of the performance text itself?

Silence is experienced in many ways in relation to the expectations and conventions of musical performance practices. Silence makes audible the material authoring and enactments of

musical performance creativity. A number of writers, including Jane Davidson (2014), further develop these ideas in their definitions of performance creativity[1] as authorial and identity forming through the patterns of interaction with the performer(s), the instrument(s), the physical environment, the body, the mind, the cultural and the social, all of which, we maintain, can be enacted through music. In addition to these parameters the interplay of silence and sound that takes place in the sonic 'in-between' (Gadamer, 1975, p. 109) of the performer and audience, we believe, is central to the core relationships between the artist and their environment, instrument, other musicians, self and pulse (Green, 2011). We can go even further still with the concept of the music itself as an atemporal 'other' that we nurture into being time and again through our performances, permitting different characterisations of silence as musical performance practice.. There are clear connections here with the increased attention to ontological study in music in the past decade, not least as a result of the 'performative turn' in musicology (Cook, 2013) which seeks to validate the transfer of musical meaning from texts to performance.

Silence is one of the dynamic locales of the sounded agency and choices of the performer as they develop their performative voice (via performance creativity), particularly in relationship with specific recordings or interpretations. Cook (2013, p. 241) describes this phenomenon as each performance of a work being related like a family member, sharing the same features but in different proportions. In contrast, the discourse on silence, dominated by discussion of John Cage's work and ideas, particularly his 1952 composition *4′33″*, is critically and conceptually important to the development of twentieth-century sound art and music.

In this chapter we focus on why silence matters and how silence and sound become corporeal spaces in which music performance practices become crystallisations of performance creativity. In this way, our discussion contributes to the growing body of research on the salience of silence in performance, as exhibited in diverse performance practices. We also consider the potential of this work to catalyse innovation in music education.

We draw on a scoping study reported elsewhere whose aim was threefold: (i) to identify how silence is manifest in performance practice; (ii) to identify whether silence in a musical excerpt can affect the listener's perception; and (iii) to further our understanding of the role of

[1] Music psychologist Jane Davidson explains that we should view performance creativity in relation to 'persona, competence and group interaction, improvisatory practices, emotion and inter-subjectivity, entrainment of groove and reception' (2014, p. 180).

silence as a parameter of performance creativity (Burnard et al., 2021). All of this is reported elsewhere, where we explored the ways in which two musicians performed silence in relation to sound, Miles Davis in 'Round Midnight' and Glenn Gould in the Aria from Bach's *Goldberg variations*. We made qualitative analyses of transcriptions of their recordings, and conducted an online survey of listeners' perceptions of the difference between two recordings of the same piece played by the same performers. In this chapter we wish to explore the question of *how silence acts relationally – in moments of temporal expansion and contraction, in which different phases of the music suggest different rates of temporal unfolding – as a dimension of voicing performance creativity*.

Silence as a Space-time Performance Practice

Silence, it has been argued, is a relational and emergent 'cutting' of sound's multifarious presences (Brackett, 2016). Similarly, Coggins (2016) suggests we should view genre, like silence, as a 'constellation' of reference points which upholds listeners' subjective responses and mediates the enactment of performance creativity. Just as silence performs and interacts differently with different social, political and environmental settings, silence is both material and corporeal, existing in time and space in performance creativity.

What then do diverse music performance practices reveal about silence? Silence is seen to reveal the *sublime*. For example, Handel's audacious and rule-breaking silences are seen as rhetorical interruptions and considered and experienced as sublime. In the performance practices of Indian classical music, there are pauses and interruptions, but the sublime moment of silence is a heightened moment of acute senses, a moment of *suspended animation*, when time seems to stand still. In the concert hall, Cage's *4'33"* acknowledges the impossibility of silence; consequently any sound heard or made in relation to the expectations and conventions of musical performance makes audible the 'dematerialisation of the object of composition, emptying the score of its musical sounds' (Voegelin, 2010, p. 81). For Miles Davis, who made the performative value of the silent space or absence of sound even more explicit, 'It's not the notes you play, it's the notes you don't play' (da Fonseca-Wollheim, 2019).

John Coltrane's 'sheets of sound' approach to playing offered an alternative aesthetic in which long musical lines, comprising multi-noted patterns, were characterised by the absence of silence (Ratliff, 2007). Coltrane's deep involvement with what he was playing meant that his solos went on for some time 'I get involved in the thing and I don't know how to stop'. On one occasion Miles replied 'Try taking the saxophone out of your mouth!' (Carr, 1998: 167).

So, what can we learn from crossing the thresholds of diverse performance practices and performance spaces, when we consider how silence matters? For some the significance and role of silence in music is a well-worked furrow. Nevertheless, there remain a number of questions about how musicians use, perform and understand silence in relation to sound, and how silence contributes to a player's performance creativity, meaning their authorial or expressive voice.

In the humanities and performance arts, the aesthetic and social function of silence as an act has been considered a grounding force in forming knowledge, and a space for reflection and emotion. Modernist composers such as Anton Webern and Salvatore Sciarrino have scrutinised silence, seeing it in intimate relation with sound or, as with John Cage, have sought to erase the line between silence and sound and thereby between music and sound (Metzer, 2006). In musicology, silence has been considered as both shaping music as an aesthetic (Harris, 2005) and bypassing the aesthetic and cultural premise of music (Wong, 2014).

The COVID-19 pandemic and the impact of lockdown strategies across the world have given an even greater significance to studies, such as the present one, that attempt to engage with the salience[2] of silence. As performances in the presence of physical audiences have ceased, musicians have sought to develop new ways to create and share music with listeners, taking innovative approaches to spanning the gulf of silence. Along with finding ways for music to be heard, musicians have also needed to cope with the experience of playing to virtual audiences, where the absence of the physical presence of listeners has exposed the significance of the shared silences embodied in performance.

What does the study of enactments of silence reveal about music?

Samuel Wilson argues in his recently published book *New music and the crises of materiality* (2021) that if 'music writes bodily discourses, and bodies are one matter of music as a discourse, this can also be compared productively with other kinds of writing' (p. 30). If this is so, then how is making silence one of most lucid moments of one's production of performance creativity? As an example of how *silence reveals the sublime*, Handel's 'audacious and rule-breaking silences', which have been seen as rhetorical interruptions, are now being posited as a reason for his music being considered and experienced as 'sublime' (Harris, 2005, p. 558). Harris

[2] *Salience* comes from the Latin *salire*, meaning to leap. Something with salience leaps out at you because it is unique or special in some way (https://www.vocabulary.com). The Oxford English Dictionary defines salience as 'most noticeable or important'.

draws an analogy here with Longinus's idea that 'sublimity is the echo of a noble mind' (p. 556). In the intimacy of silence and sound, the fine line between the interior of a person and the exterior social world is a space of silence that for the composer Luigi Dono carries deep feelings, and for Salvatore Sciarrino, madness and spirituality (Metzer, 2006).

In Indian classical music, there are pauses and interruptions, but the sublime moment of silence is a heightened moment of acute senses, a moment of suspended animation, when time seems to stand still. The pause in Indian classical music is an opportunity for the artist to do something new, something fresh, something of higher quality; it evokes a heightened sense of anticipation in the listener, priming them to enter a heightened state of listening, whereby the pause can be a spectacular entry or a glorious interruption. In north Indian music, the silent space *khali* is also the space between two beats, implied with the wave of a hand, and 'forms the basis of time keeping' without which it would be difficult to find the *sam*, the first beat, the beginning of the cycle (Courtney, 2020).

In antiphonal singing in Western psalm chants, where two halves of a community sing alternate verses, there is in the middle of each verse a pause for breath, the *media distinctio*, which Hornby and Maloy (2013, p. 31) propose heightens a sense of communal unity. The music does not disappear in this silence but 'functions temporarily and temporally on a different level' (Williamson, 2013, p. 31), as the pause for breath signals a shift from an embodied performance of music to a collective performance of silence. For Pauline Oliveros one of the most interesting moments in an improvisation is the silence that precedes the first sound:

> It's a beautiful moment because anything could happen. And nobody knows necessarily in an improvisation what is going to happen … I think that moment is really special. The moment the first sound is there then the waveform collapses – meaning that the potential has now got a direction. Whereas before it didn't have a direction. That's what makes it so special you know. (Rose, 2017: 200)

Whether improvised or notated, silence is not an absence of music; silence is directly related to sound, a formative element of music involving 'the coordination of sonorities and silences' (Clifton, 1983, p. 163). Music psychologists recognise that the silence between notes may be as important for what makes music as the notes themselves, and they have investigated empirically how silences affect the perception and experience of music, for example, in

anticipating the end of a phrase or perceiving a dramatic moment, by experimenting with the placements of silences and their lengths (Margulis, 2007).

Yet, despite *rich historical and cultural depths* of expressing silence in music, silence tends to be defined in the West as 'the absence of sound' (de Visscher, 2014, p. 197) and is often signalled by the instruction that an instrument should not play or a voice should not utter. This suggests a simple relationship between sound and silence, a binary that privileges sound (e.g. playing) over silence. This relationship is rendered more complex when we consider other terms that are used to represent a silence in music, for example *rest* and *pause*, which differ from *tacet*, which is the instruction not to play at all. A rest is a notational device indicating silence for a specific duration of time; the signs for rests correspond to the duration of notes. The experience of a pause in music, defined as 'a short silence', is indicated by a sign placed over a note, chord or rest which, in performance, 'is to be prolonged at the performer's will' (Scholes, 1964, p. 433). The composer Harrison Birtwistle argues that the distinction between a pause and a silence has to be felt, as it cannot be prescribed (personal communication, 1 November 2019). The locale of this condition - performing silence - is played out by the body, through the body, as *sounding oneself.* As argued by Samuel Wilson in his 2021 book, *New Music and the Crises of Materiality*, ,'music tells us what the body is' (p. 44); we experience our own bodies as objects as the locale of personal creativity.

In Japan, however, silence is privileged over sound with the Japanese concept of *ma*, which is the silent and empty space in between the notes, a space of contemplation, energy and creative potential. *Ma* is also a sense of place in relation to the whole; hence in music a pause is related to the whole.

These examples from history and a range of cultures reveal a rich and complex relationship between silence and music, in which silence is energy, a creative space in between the notes, a creative space in between sound and movement, a sublime suspended animation, and a pause that may be a glorious interruption. These ideas and musical practices may also be seen in the cultural practices of silence in performing rituals and artistic practice, and these may shed further light on the parameters of the use of silence in creative practice. For example, in Japan, the performance of ritual in the *chado* tearoom takes place in a space of dialogue and contemplation that is conducted in silence, where participants set aside the concerns of everyday

life in a suspended time away from an otherwise unpredictable and violence-prone world. In this space, one is not bound by the limits of language, and one can engage in a kind of flow.

From contemplation in the dialogic ritual of silence to contemplation in the self-dialogue of an artist, Matisse reflects on how in silence one can seek oneself, see oneself, then translate this seeking and seeing into the artwork. For him, every creative act comes from one's inner vision, light and contemplation through the silence of the paintbrush (see Caranfa, 2014). And, reflecting on the elusiveness of silence, as conceptualised by Merleau-Ponty (1968), language communicates and performs the silence that is wished for and enveloped by language.

Silence may also extend a sound, movement, utterance or brushstroke, as in Japanese Noh theatre:

> The movement that is allowed in Noh theatre is only a moment's movement. You need to stage the silence after that moment of movement so that it becomes movement that extends beyond that moment. It is a reversal of silence and movement. (Japanese playwright Kensuke Yokouchi, as cited in Kenny, 2011, pp. 100–101)

The performance art of drama recognises that

> The space around, between, or beyond words may be deployed to great effect, creating suspense or contrast, and highlighting the significance or insignificance of what is actually said. Audiences can be drawn into the stage by silences, or be fascinated by the ways in which playwrights evoke the inarticulate. (Kenny, 2011, p. 98)

From the arts we gain further richly complex understandings of the role of silence in creative processes: silence *suspends time* and opens dialogic spaces for contemplation with others and with self; silence is flow; silence can *extend movement beyond the moment*; and silence is *flexible*, available for many possible meanings in reciprocity with words, actions and sounds. These may be added to the parameters of silence in music.

In sum, silence is much more than the simple absence of sound. These illustrations of the parameters of silence in creative performance drawn from literature, painting, dance, theatre, tea ceremony and music come from diverse creative practices and cultures, and offer fertile ground for investigating musicians' use, performance and understanding of silence in relation to sound, and the potential role of silence in the listener's perception of the player's creative and authorial, expressive voice.

The Importance of Silence in Performative Practices Across Genres

The following discussion explores two contrasting viewpoints on the relationship between sound and silence in music: the conceptual perspective of John Cage (1912–1992), who challenged the conceptualisation of the nature of silence in his composition *4′33″* and the practice of jazz drummer John Stevens (1940–1994), who proposed that sound and silence are equal and opposite. Both of these positions go beyond understanding silence in music as merely 'not playing' and enable us to interrogate the mechanism of silence within music performance and advance the discourse on the manifestation of silences as intentional or unintentional, relational and collaborative, underpinned by the authorial voice of a composer or performer.

Any discussion of the relationship between silence and sound has to take into account the contribution of John Cage, 'an obligatory point of passage' (de Visscher, 2014, p. 196), who problematised the way we perceive silence at both a conceptual and a compositional level. Conceptually, his expectations of silence were challenged by his experience of entering an anechoic chamber, a place of no echoes. Up to that point he had maintained a conception of silence as an absence of sound; however within that space he realised that absolute silence does not exist, as the body is always producing sound, such as the working of the nervous system and blood pulsing though our circulatory system. 'And so silence becomes the set of all non-intentional sounds and is expressed as an attitude of listening and openness' (de Visscher, 2014, p. 197).

This insight encouraged Cage to react against approaches that privileged the intentionality[3] of the composer and over an extended period of time he developed his ideas about the possibilities of music, embracing the influence of composers such as Varèse, who was opening music up to include noise and silence, and Zen Buddhist philosophy. His compositions utilised structures that were based on time frames, not on tones, 'because only duration is common to both sound and silence' (de Visscher, 2014, p. 196). The iconic composition *4′33″* became 'the logical conclusion to Cage's quest for self-withdrawal from his work' (Griffiths, 1995, p. 28) and occupied a central place in his oeuvre (de Visscher, 2014).

In *4′33″* the performer is instructed to be *tacet* and to adopt the stance of someone who is about to play. This establishes a reciprocal relationship between the performer and the audience,

[3] From a phenomenological perspective, intentionality is concerned with the fact that all consciousness is consciousness of something or is directed towards something (Macey, 2001).

a channel for social, musical and artistic interaction in which the audience recognise that any sounds they make will be part of the piece. Speaking after the première of *4'33"* Cage said:

> They missed the point. There's no such thing as silence. What they thought was silence, because they didn't know how to listen, was full of accidental sounds. You could hear the wind stirring outside during the first movement. During the second, raindrops began pattering the roof, and during the third the people themselves made all kinds of interesting sound as they talked or walked out. (Kostelanetz, 2003, p. 70)

In what ways did Cage manage to problematise how we perceive silence and what contribution did he make? First, in his writings he foregrounded the significance of silence. Second, he challenged the binary view that privileges sound over silence. Third, the way we hear silence has been changed by his claim that silence is impossible. Compositionally, he embraced non-intentionality by adopting structural forms based on time frames within which non-intentional and accidental sounds can be acknowledged, thereby silencing his authorial voice. From an audience's perspective, Cage's music demands that we learn how to listen, to hear silence as a material presence of intentional and non-intentional sounds that demand equal value and attention.

Whilst Cage denies the possibility of silence, the jazz drummer John Stevens perceives silence and sound as being equal and opposite. John Stevens, a leading figure in the London free jazz scene and founding member of the Spontaneous Music Ensemble, played a key role in developing a distinctive practice for non-idiomatic/free improvisation in Europe. Stevens' performance practice included improvised music workshops that were 'not exclusive in their intention but inclusive; anyone can play, regardless of formal technical accomplishment' (Stevens, 1985, p. iv). The workshop exercises that he created are published in *Search and reflect* (Stevens, 1985).

For Stevens rhythm is fundamental to the language of music and it emerges from the equal relationship between sound and its opposite, silence. A property that is common to both sound and silence is duration, achieved by manipulating the length of sound from a *click* (the shortest possible sound) to a *sustain* (the longest possible sound). Rhythm manifests itself through attending to the lengths of the silences and the sounds.

Stevens argues that if sound is taken as a starting point then this immediately implies the opposite, the absence of sound, which is silence. For him music making is about being aware of

silence as a positive, and equally important, musical ingredient that co-exists alongside sound. Giving silence and sound equal value requires those playing these pieces to give attention to what they are not playing as well as to what and when they are playing. Consequently, the ability to listen with care and attention and to be able to collaborate is more significant than individual performing skills. As Lash points out, 'Listening is of primary importance while improvising. Indeed, guitarist Fred Frith once described the London improvisation scene as being one of "virtuoso listening"' (2013, p. 4.). For Stevens the development of listening skills allows us to engage with and appreciate the significance of silence. Whereas Cage perceives silence as a space for unintentional and accidental sounds, Stevens sees silence as a space that invites musicians to contribute intentional sounds and respond intuitively to the unique sound-silence environment of each improvisation. A similar perspective to Stevens is seen in Frank Zappa's concept of the *time hole* where 'a composer … goes around forcing his will on unsuspecting air molecules' within a pocket of silence (Zappa with Occhiogrosso, 1990, p. 162).

These two contrasting perspectives illustrate that music is a complex landscape in which silence emerges from, and is particularly salient to, the creative possibilities between space, time and sound as an aesthetic and interpreted expression (Born, 2013, p. 5). They also raise questions about why silence features so little in performance practice studies when its significance as a performative act and perceptual process is so great. Research in sound studies has had little to say about music's entanglement of time-space and sonic-spatial practices, which include not only the nesting of performance and composition[4] of acoustic space, but 'the confluence of acoustic, political, social and public spaces' (Born, 2013, p. 5). The creative possibilities of the boundaries between music, sound and space, and ways of addressing music as both performance and event (Cook, 2001), suggest the salience of silence can be found in its generative and non-generative dimensions.

And so in returning to what characterises the salience of silence in relation to sound, as evidenced in diverse practices, what matters is that we are attuned to:

(a) the particularity of the space of silence in music performance practices;
(b) the localisation of silence and sound in physical and perceptual space; and

[4] Composition: a type of creativity resulting in creative work containing predetermined ideas that have been arranged or organised in the most ideal way (Burnard, 2012).

(c) the creation of performance creativity and its ability to voice artists' inherent manifestation, illumination or expression of their musical self.

So, while silence has been treated as a quite uniform entity in musicological studies, the complex structure of sound and silence gives rise to a number of different kinds of questions about how silence is put to work in different performance practices and how this becomes manifest in music education. For example, and elaborating further from the previous questions, what differences are there between composition-based performances, as found in Western classical music, where silence is largely determined by the composer prior to the performance, and jazz performance practices (which are improvisational), where silence can be utilised by the performer in the moment?

The relationship between improvisation[5] and composition is a complex and contested matter. One approach is to see them as binary, opposed concepts, constructed on the basis of perceived fundamental differences in which composition is presented as a superior form of creativity that is 'thought through', an aesthetic of perfection (Hamilton, 2007a), whereas improvisation is what happens on the spur of the moment. A more nuanced approach is to see improvisation and compositions as two ends of a continuum that share the common characteristic of the dynamic interplay between fixed, non-negotiable structures and emergent structures that permit variation and adaptation (Sorensen, 2014) and embody individual and sociocultural authorings of diverse creativities through engagement with sound which provides us with a pathway to the good life (Randles, 2020).

The difference between composition and improvisation creativities, whether scripted or unscripted performance practices, can be seen as a matter of degree, the extent to which the performance creativity manifests in practical terms the materiality of scripted sound spaces that delimit the degree to which performers are permitted to exercise their agency. Maybe the relationship between improvisation and compositional creativities is best understood by performers being permitted greater or lesser agentic licence, and a significant aspect of that agentic licence is concerned with where, when and how silences are placed within the music.

[5] Improvisation: a type of spontaneous and intentional creativity, occurring in real time as a consequence of the dynamic interplay between fixed and generative structures and interactions (with other performers, audience or materials; Sorensen, 2014).

This suggests that the different parameters of the performance of silence, such as temporality, spatiality, interpretation, intentionality and non-intentionality, are present in both scripted (compositional) and unscripted (improvisational) performance practices; however, the extent to which they give agency[6] to the performer is a matter of degree.

Rethinking the Materiality of Silence

There is a tension at the heart of the discourses that characterise the relationality between silence and sound. First, there is the binary approach, which perceives silence simply as the absence of sound, which we call the *tacet* perspective, and which privileges sound (i.e. playing) over silence (i.e. not playing). Second, there is the perception that sound and silence have an equal relationship. Central to this performance practice is the aim to make musicians aware of the silence into which they are placing their sounds. The third view is that temporal silences act as structural frames within which music can exist. The score no longer represents the musical ideas heard and intended by the composer but delineates a time frame within which sounds may occur.

The relationship between sound and silence is clearly fundamental to the way that we perform and perceive music. This leads us to the question of how we pinpoint the manifestation of silence in diverse performance practices as an expressive parameter that contributes to the formation of an authorial voice and/or performance creativity and the role of audience perception. Three key ideas from within Chinese thought, by social psychologist music education researcher, C. Victor Fung (2017), come to mind here; that of change, balance and liberation through the ying-yang relationality and entanglement of sound and silence. In our earlier study we found that Miles Davis and Glenn Gould had different approaches to the way that silence is used. These differences appear to stem from different performance practices that were grounded in aesthetic judgements relating to the agency that each musician allowed themselves in relation to dialogue and interpretation. We found that:

1. Miles Davis's performance practice appeared to be primarily concerned with his own sound, interpretation and aura as a jazz musician. The intentionality underscoring his performance practice appears to have a unique quality informed by in-the-moment decisions that mark each performance out as being different from previous

[6] Agency: the capacity to act or take action according to the conditions of a given environment (Burnard, 2012).

performances, allowing him greater interpretative leeway, which includes permission to adapt the tune. Similarly, American jazz saxophonist and composer John Coltrane, a major figure in the evolution of modern jazz said "The reason I play so many sounds, maybe it sounds angry, is because I'm trying so many things at one time, you see? I haven't sorted them out. I have a whole bag of things that I'm trying to work through and get the one essential" (Kentake, 2015).

2. Glenn Gould's performance practice, by contrast, was also concerned with interpretation but this was confined within the tighter parameters established by the composition, which provide limited opportunity for adaptation. This is often referred to as the 'feel' that a jazz musician brings to a performance. Similiarly, American Jazz pianist Lennie Tristano's underlying belief was that "the jazz musicians' function is 'to feel'". He stated in an interview that "You have to be influenced by all great musicians, no matter what instrument they play, because the essence of jazz is feeling, it's not really the notes, it's the feeling behind" (Shim 2007, 124).
3. Miles Davis, as one of the greatest jazz trumpeters in history, appears to have been able to create new silences that were not in earlier performances. These seem to have been made in the moment by sensing when silences could interrupt the temporal flow. This creates anticipation and tension within the music. These could be called macro-silences and are both intentional and intuitive, an example of the musician's agency. 'Silence', one of the pieces performed by the Ornette Coleman Trio at the Fairfield Halls Croydon on August 29 1965, is a rare example of a jazz tune that deliberately exploits the way in which silences interrupt the temporal flow of the music. 'Silence' begins loud and fast , until a huge split alto-sax tone leads to sudden silence; passages of fiery phrases alternate with rubato silences, then, though at times faint, momentary bass and percussion enter the silences (once, a soft instance of bass is struck dead by a drum shot); the silences are the theme of the work, with interludes of happy or passionate or ferocious playing (Litweiler, 1992: 200) The first significant silence, coming some 23 seconds into the performance, elicits a patter of applause from the audience which fades away as they comprehend that the silences are part of the piece and that it is not over.

4. Glenn Gould did not create silences in the music in this way and there are certainly no extended pauses between the phrases. Given that his purpose was to be faithful to the written score, his attention was to the micro-silences that separate one note from another in an attempt to give each note its due and appropriate attention. The precision in Gould's playing was a consequence of his attention to detail, especially in the relationship between one note and another. He was able to achieve this in the recording studio, recording passages several times until he achieved a take that satisfied his intentions as a performer.
5. Miles Davis's interpretation of the theme of 'Round Midnight allowed him to leave notes out (i.e., to silence them), adapting Thelonious Monk's original theme to create his own interpretation, a personalised and minimal account of Monk's original tune. Glenn Gould's aesthetic did not allow him to remove or extend the written passages. However, he did permit himself to play the music at a slower tempo in his later recording from 1981, expanding the amount of time in which to play the piece. This could be seen as expanding the frame of silence into which he placed the notes. The greater amount of time and space in the later recording allowed him to attend to the way that the notes were placed in relation to each other. American improviser and saxophonist Lee Konitz does not consider it is possible to really improvise when playing really fast as this does not give time to think and you have to rely on pre-conceived patterns. He has said 'One of the reasons I wasn't able to do that (play fast and strong) is that I didn't know what I was going to play … you can play as strongly as you want when you're not thinking about what note to select' (Hamilton, 2007b: 106). Slower tempos match the speed that he can think as an improviser.

In summary, we can say that as the most potent amplifier of silence in performance practice, Miles Davis's use of silence could be characterised *as the art of subtraction* in which silences are introduced into the music and notes are left out. In contrast, Glenn Gould's use of silence was more subtle, *an art of attention to the spaces between the notes*, to the micro silences which, in the later recording, allowed him to give greater attention to the detail of the music. What these two artists help us to understand is that the relationship between silences and sounds, the choices that inform decisions about when to play and when not to play, significantly shape the authorial

voice of the performer. This is clearly illustrated if we consider the counter example of John Coltrane, who played with Miles Davis from 1955 to 1960 prior to leading his own groups. Compositions such as 'Giant Steps', or the later 'Meditations' demonstrate a wide range of expressive possibilities from obsessive harmonic explorations to wild and tormented free playing. He aimed for a sweeping sound, thinking 'in groups of notes, not one at a time' (Ratliffe, 2007: 42), 'stacking' three chords on to one and needing to place as many notes as possible within the space of a bar. Coltrane's sound, as 'a full and sensible embodiment of his artistic personality, such that it can be heard, at best, in a single note' (Ratliffe, 2007: x) is as much an erasure of silence. In this respect Coltrane's authorial voice provided the yin to Miles Davis's yang, a creative contrast derived from differing relationships with silence and sound.

By Way of Conclusion

In this chapter we have investigated how silence is manifest in musical performance creativity. We have explored the way in which performance cultures and performing artists utilise silence in relation to sound as a potential parameter of authorial voice, and how silence affects the listener's perception of the player's authorial voice.

We found that the performance of silence is a purposive performative act. The recognition of silence is scripted and scored through the body – sounding oneself as a technology of performance creativity – and in the perceptual apprehension of the bodily experience silence is sounded as a condition of the materiality of sound. Silence, performance practice and performance creativity come together as sound and silences that count as something new, original, fresh and refreshed in the authoring of a performance. The silence of the ensemble gives meaning to the performance of solo instruments. This is an example of the silencing of all but a few possible sounds, based on culture, so that the remaining sounds have meaning due to the silences, as creative spaces stretching the time frames that have been created around them.

Despite the vast range of possible ways of dividing up time and space, whether the unit of measurement is tones, or units of time, the separation or space between sound and silence is a temporal interval and the passage from one to the other always entails a choice. What does this understanding mean for music education? How, then, should the relationship between sound and silence be realigned and foregrounded in questions about performance creativity and how might

all of this inspire innovation in music education? We offer three ways to enable its potentials beyond the limitations of institutions.

The first way is foregrounding the importance of listening, attending to the ways in which sounds engage in a dynamic relationship with silence and the ways that this propels an authorial voice of/in/through performance, built on time and space which emerge simultaneously. This challenges music educators to engage with the pedagogical possibilities of alternative staging choices, in-the-round performance spaces, new ways of experiencing and voicing performance creativity, and moving beyond sounds in space and time into differently performed silent spaces.

Second, following Stevens' example, educators can reclaim workshops as a site for reconstructing performance and inviting learning communities to think of/about/with silence as a text with which to create material, corporeal entities. This could start with a discussion of the phenomenology of how we experience silence and then lead to considering the relationship of sound and silence in diverse performance practices. Focusing on the rhythms, repetitions and sound–silence relations can lead to considering the spaces in which practice and/or teaching takes place. Reflecting on how silence functions as a performance creativity can open up spaces for collaborative dances among players, within the processes of rehearsing and devising performances.

Third, by making a privileged space for silence, as part of an authorial practice and discourse of music performance, the phenomenon becomes foundational to authoring certain performance practices, supporting a quest for the new and the innovative. When such seemingly ordinary participatory gestures (performing silence) carry an unexpected potential for new forms of material production, they call attention to and allow a shift away from the old assumptions underlying certain forms of performance creativity. Each of these understandings invite an expansion of performance practices, a broadening terrain for developing innovative methodologies that blur the boundaries between audiences and performers. The intersections and borders between the space of sound and silence may become less accidental and more about a reimagining of the relationship of music to education and to society. Music education could be a means of transforming the agency, discourse (language) and practice of performance creativity in ways that are not necessarily predetermined by the makers of the artworks alone.

Questions for Discussion

1. There is a need to develop the practice and discourse on silence and the ways in which the use of silence reveals aspects of the authorial voice of composers and performers. The choices that inform their use of silences are as significant as the choices made in the use of melody, harmony, rhythm and timbre. How does musical silence open musical possibilities and questions of musical materiality and conventions of performance in your practice and programme?
2. When is silence possibly the most lucid moment of one's experiential production of sound? Reflect on what you listen to and the soundscape of your sonic life-world. How do you experience sound out of silence as a relationship? What does silence emphasise? When is there a dialectical differentiation? Do you hear sounds in silence? Miles Davis said, 'In music, silence is more important than sound' (Brian Eno News, 2013). Do you agree with this?
3. As music educators, what should we rethink about performance creativity as manifest in the temporality of material sounds emerging out of silence? What does this bring to the silences that are composed, performed, perceived and talked about? What are the implications for the assessment of performance creativity?

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