

Rethinking Music Education – Towards a Performative Turn

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1. Introduction

Already by 1918, the German Max Hermann (1865–1942) was endorsing a groundbreaking idea for the era in the field of theatre: “My conviction [...] is that theatre and drama [...] are so essentially opposite in their origins [...] that they cannot avoid manifesting their symptoms. Drama is the creation of an individual using words artistically, while theatre is created through the merit of the public and its servants”.¹ This separation of text/representation would serve as the foundation in the 1970s for the modern *Theaterwissenschaft*² in Germany, as well as for the American performance studies of around the same time, and above all during the following decade.³ From this moment forward, three major fields in the academic world would be perfectly demarcated: philology, performing arts and performance studies.⁴ Their respective objects of study would be the written text, the representation of the text and the events that arise during the representation of the text (if any). Thus, in performance studies the text ceases to be treated as the focus of attention, as a *monument*, and is instead treated as an *artefact* amongst other artefacts. Attention turns towards investigating the handling of this

1 „Theater und Drama [...] sind nach meiner Überzeugung [...] ursprünglich Gegensätze, [...] die zu wesenhaft sind, als daß sich ihre Symptome nicht immer wieder zeigen sollten: das Drama ist die wortkünstlerische Schöpfung des Einzelnen, das Theater ist eine Leistung des Publikums und seiner Diener“, in „Bühne und Drama“, published in the German newspaper *Vossische Zeitung*, 30th of July 1918, cit. by Fischer-Lichte (2004: 43).

2 Theater Studies.

3 In 1980 the Graduate Drama Department of the University of New York become the *Department of Performance Studies*, the first of its kind in the world (Schechner & Brady, 2013: 20).

4 *Theaterwissenschaft* in German speaking countries.

and other artefacts *during* the staging: energy flows, setting creation, interactions between actors and spectators, and reactions by the public. The spotlight is directed at “the social and cultural communities and their relation to the significance of events, the forms of action and the physically experienced processes”⁵ (Lange, 2006: 9).

The case of Spain is unique in that while philological studies are widely consolidated as university disciplines, performing arts are situated outside the realm of the university, and there are no specifically analogous studies similar to the German *Theaterwissenschaft* or anglophone performance studies. In a similar vein, it is impossible to ignore the existing parallels between literary studies and music studies in Spain. Thus, while musicology treats the study of the music score as a *monument* and is offered both in universities and music conservatories, musical composition and instrumental performance are only housed in the latter institutions. Furthermore, the Spanish Faculties of Education Sciences have eliminated music education degrees from their catalogues, opening an unparalleled gap with respect to other nearby advanced countries in Europe (see Rodríguez-Quiles, 2012/2014/2016).

Despite the need and relevance to study the complex world of music from different perspectives, I argue here that performative music education (PME) and musicology are distinct fields. While musicology deals with the study of the music score (the *monument*) as an individual artistic creation, PME studies the *events* proposed for academic purposes to deal with the phenomenon of sound in the classroom. By *event*, I mean the particular atmosphere that emerges in the classroom (or other performative space) thanks to pedagogical-music activities between teachers and students who come from possibly diverse cultural, social, biographical and situational contexts; and with determined expectations, interests and moods. From this particular atmosphere something will occur that may well only happen once. That something occurs and what occurs affects all participants in the event, although in different ways and with different intensities, which should be taken into account from a pedagogical point of view.

5 „[...]Soziale Gemeinschaften und Kulturen unter dem Aspekt der Bedeutsamkeit von Ereignissen, Handlungsformen und körperlich zu erfahrenden Prozessen“.

Education offers a space in which a continuous repetition of ritualized acts take place, similar to many other areas in life. As part of this framework, PME provides opportunities to play with and experience the same musical work in diverse ways. Thus for example, while in a history of music or a music analysis class the Symphony No. 40 KV 550 by W. A. Mozart *is what it is*, (i.e., it was composed in 1788, there is a notable absence of trumpets and timpani in the orchestration, along with the No. 25 it is the only minor key symphony of the composer Salzburg), in PME, this same work can be lived, re-lived, and re-experienced in different forms. For, while recorded music used in the classroom *is what it is*, the conditions of an *educative music performance* vary (in fact they are always different as the students experience Mozart in chronological time and in different emotional states). This potential of PME contributes like few others to a student's self-awareness and personal development and herein lies the importance of music as an indispensable part of the compulsory curriculum.

2. Foundation for a performative music education

Paraphrasing Féral (1982),⁶ we can affirm that unlike musicology, the aim of PME is not to narrate music facts, but rather to evoke synaesthetic relationships with an aesthetically-educational intention between those involved in the music teaching/learning process. Logically, this has immediate consequences in the field. In fact, PME is not designed exclusively around nor defined by the *music score*, nor does it intend to promote an *imaginary museum* of music works by the great geniuses of Western classical music. What PME puts in the spotlight as the object of its study is what I will call the *educative music performance (EMP)*. This is the implementation of educational music sequences as well as the impact of these on all the participants in the teaching/learning process (both for students and teachers). In other words, the very "staging"

6 "[The performance] attempts not to tell (like theatre), but rather to provoke synaesthetic relationships between subjects" (Féral, 1982: 179).

of the music class acquires an artistic-educational status when it fulfils this function. That is, provided that the implementation has an artistic and educational intention in some sense only granted by the context. EMPs produce effects in participants, generating realities that are perceived and understood in determined ways, yet can also be modified by the consensus of the group. Consequently, these educative music performances do not have, nor are assumed to have, a universal value (unlike what has been presupposed since the nineteenth century when considering the monuments of the imaginary musical museum). Although the initial intention might be aesthetic and educational, only the specific context in which they are carried out can lead to their achievement or failure, similar to what happens during the performative utterances of Austin, in the case of speech acts.⁷

In this sense, the EMP, like life itself, cannot be planned nor predicted 100 %, as the teacher (in particular) has to be very attentive to the flow of events in order to introduce new elements that the teaching instruction requires. Examples of this unpredictability are often seen in classes with disruptive students, eager to undermine carefully planned classes at any moment. However, apart from these more extreme cases, it is necessary to be equally attentive to the reactions of *all* students during the EMP, as often they will arise solely as a result of interactions between participants, and some of them will be unpredictable even for the more experienced teacher. It is the impossibility to control an EMP 100 % in advance which makes it interesting as an educational practice and as an object of scientific study. As can be seen, there is a need to distinguish between planning for and implementing an EMP, as they are concepts that should not be confused. Thus, while planning has to do with the classical aspects of the pedagogical and didactic process (usually in the form of objectives, contents, sequencing, timing, and evaluation), implementing refers directly to the performative aspects of staging; while the first directs its attention at the student's perception and understanding, the second is carried out as an interaction of physical movements among those present in the classroom (students and teacher).

7 For motives of space I will not pursue this point here. For additional information on the performative as it was originally conceived in the area of philosophy of language, consult Austin (2010 [1962]); for an application in the area of music education see Rodríguez-Quiles (2013).

Again, it should be emphasized that the objective of PME is not the music score but the performative processes that lead to the implementation of artistic and educational sound producing activities. In this sense, the student becomes a creator, and the professor's mission is to unlock, lead the students towards and lead them back to these performative processes. Thus, the sense of social community acquires a fundamental relevance in PME, as the quality of the performative processes depends to greater or lesser extent on the number of synaesthetic relations arising between participants (students with the teacher, teacher with students and between the students). In other words, the quality of a PME does not depend exclusively on the quality of the teacher's preplanning and good methodology. If the teacher does not have the capacity and ability to satisfactorily manage all the performative elements unfolding in the classroom (through physical presence, timing, a performatively constructed space, the atmosphere, energy circulation, liminal situations ...), the process has the risk of losing student interest and in the worst case of failing. Thus, we can conclude that the following are important features of PME:

- It is defined by the relationship between intent and emergence.
- All participants are (co)creators.
- It is an eminently educational and social process.
- It has a high degree of ethical components.

In most cases, the direct influence musicology exerts on music education in Spain continues to impose textual culture (i.e., the deference to music scores written by the geniuses of Western music and the texts of those who write about music), and to look with contempt at any other possibility. This includes even considerations for ethnomusicology, a discipline that "pure" musicologists regard with disdain. It therefore must be admitted that musicology and music education are distinct disciplines with different study objects and analysis methodologies. Although they obviously have points in common, they have more characteristics that divide them than unite them, despite the insistence by some to argue otherwise.⁸ Moving from the music score to the educa-

⁸ "It is obvious [?] that the contents of music education pertain to musicology, which in a traditional classification and unanimously [?] accepted includes ..." (Martín Moreno, 2001: 539).

tive music performance (from the meaning to the effect, the mind to the body), involves understanding music education's great importance as an educational element in a postmodern society precisely due to its performativity and not the music quality per se. However, there is a continued tendency by some to only grant importance to the monuments of the privileged few at the expense of others, while third parties select (and exclude) these from study programs. Put another way, it can no longer be sustained that "musicology [...] currently includes absolutely everything [...] and, as it could not be any other way, music pedagogy or teaching should also necessarily derive its contents and a good part of its methods from the diversity of its disciplines" (Martín Moreno, 2001: 540). As I have argued elsewhere (see Rodríguez-Quiles, 2012), these kinds of unsubstantiated assertions remain common in Spain. The previous quote is erroneous in reporting that (1) music pedagogy and music teaching are the same,⁹ (2) the object of study is already dealt with in some branch of musicology which it is sufficient to use discretionarily and (3) their research methods are applicable to music education without further thought.

The literature also includes statements of intent that believe the solution to music education's problems can be "[a]chieved by adapting music teaching content and objectives to the realities of current music and the advances in musicology research" (Rodríguez Suso, 2000: 6). Although the author was referring to adult education, the humble situating of music "teaching" in respect to musicology's "advances" is striking. Nevertheless, instead of taking this conceptualization of music education as an affront, it should serve as encouragement for those of us who are dedicated to improving everything that can be improved, as quite possibly much remains to be done. My proposal in this sense is to encourage a performative turn in this field of research. Thus, when PME centres its object of study on the *events* that take place in the classroom, it distances itself from the traditional line-up of musicology interests. Consequently, its research methods are very different from those intended to conserve musical heritage, music review, musical af-

⁹ In countries with a long tradition of music education such as Germany or Austria, the name of the university department for this discipline is *Institut für Musikpädagogik und Musikdidaktik* (Institute of Music Education and Music Teaching), showing clearly the grouping of two complementary but different areas.

fairs and analysis of the musical score, aspects that do belong to the diverse musicological disciplines. For this reason, I will briefly discuss below some of the methodological problems facing research in PME.

In a genuinely anthropological sense, the musical nature of humans provides an inexhaustible source of necessary synergies to continue as a civilized society during times of multiple crises, such as those faced by Spain in the 21st century. These synergies can only take place through lived events, and in particular, through the help offered through the arts and music. Performative events are not found in musical archives nor exclusively in rational digressions on *the music of the spheres*. For this reason it is difficult to understand political decisions geared in the opposite direction that eliminate subjects from compulsory curriculum that should instead be promoted to no end.¹⁰ Indeed, due to PME's unique way of approaching and dealing with reality, it could serve as a model for other school subjects shaping the educational systems of contemporary societies. Instead, what continues to be prioritized are some "important" curriculum areas that have clearly and overwhelmingly demonstrated their inability to create citizens who are more egalitarian, public-minded, engaged and much less happier with themselves and in the world around them.

3. Bodies that listen – Listening that acts

In 1911, the Swiss Emile Jaques-Dalcroze founded in the German city of Hellerau, near Dresden, the Bildungsanstalt für Rhythmische Gymnastik¹¹ with the express intention of awakening in his students a new rhythmic awareness (see Wilms, 2005). He believed perception of rhythm is only possible through body movement, making specific training necessary to be able to assimilate and play different rhythms with different parts of the body simultaneously (polyrhythm) (see Jaques-Dalcroze, 1994 [1922]). This approach, now viewed as normal in

¹⁰ To see how poorly music has been treated in the Spanish compulsory curriculum, one need only refer to the current education law known as the LOMCE (see bibliography references and Rodríguez-Quiles, 2014).

¹¹ Lit., Educational Institution for Rhythmic Gymnastics.

music education, was groundbreaking at the time especially in Europe of the 1920s when dances like the shimmy and the charleston with its characteristic rhythms, among others, were imported from the US.

From a performative view, this is the blurring of the boundaries between the phenomenological body and the semiotic body. To put it briefly, it is to overcome the difference between a “body”-in-the-world (see Heidegger, 2009 [1927]) and its use with other meanings. Not only it is to act “as if” my body is one thing or another, but at the same time making clear that the action has nothing to do with myself or with my body. In the case of the performative, it is not simply imitating other things or pretending, but creating real situations or situations close to the reality of the students. It is, in short, to overcome the dichotomies between street/school, elite/popular culture, European/Non-European culture, or between formal/informal learning.

In this way, the whole body is transformed into a musical instrument both to produce and receive sound messages. These messages are perceived not only through the ears but throughout the entire body. Furthermore, one’s body is not isolated, but part of a multitude of bodies interacting in the *educative music performance*, in a particular environment that emerges at a specific time and is fundamental for its occurrence. While one or more people (professor or group of students) do something, carry out or act in something, others take in and react (they are not passive but also participants even if “only” through active listening and body signals). These reactions are perceived and responded to in turn. In other words, PME is very attentive to the feedback taking place throughout the *educative music performance* in order to respond in the best possible manner.¹² With luck it can be said that the EMP is part of reality (what emerges and develops in the music classroom is real in the determined context in which it is developing), this being precisely an important characteristic in performative processes.

As listening involves more than merely using the ears, PME understands and promotes listening in a much broader sense in conjunction with the other senses as part of the whole phenomenological experience (Heidegger being-in-the-world, *ibid.*). Within a group of people who listen with their whole body, this listening does not remain ex-

¹² It is what the German *Theaterwissenschaft* has defined as an “autopoietic feedback loop” (*autopoietische Feedbackschleife*). See Fischer-Lichte (2004/2005).

clusively inside each person, but performatively becomes part of the *autopoietische Feedbackschleife*, the autopoietic feedback loop defined by Fischer-Lichte in the case of drama (see footnote 13). They influence each other, a feat only possible during the volatile and transient moment of the EMP. Thus a continuous double process of complementarity exists between the phenomenological body and the semiotic body, which is only evident in the classroom during performative acts. This corporal nature produces certain somatic states in the class-group members. Precisely due to the transience of these performative acts and the various ways in which they are lived by the students, they are particularly complex to study. However this should not prevent their being tackled with scientific rigor. In fact, it is here in the as yet unexplored area of music education research where quite possibly the keys to some of the problems that both teachers and learners face in the classroom (not only in music classrooms) may be found.

4. Methodological problems

The moment we understand music education research as a performative investigation, whose primary object of study is the *educative music performance* and its effects, the question arises on how to scientifically analyze something that by nature is ephemeral and transitory; something that is born and dies in intervals of approximately sixty short minutes (the usual length of a music class); something that is impossible to fix or reproduce with precision in a laboratory; something that is unique and unrepeatable (as any teacher knows, the same didactic approach on paper comes to life and is experienced and lived in different ways depending on the group of students).

Action research is showing positive results as a scientific study method for the educational music practice, as demonstrated among others by the works of Parker (2010), Cain (2011/2014), Buchborn and Painsi (2011), Malmberg (2012), and De Baets and Buchborn (2014). Among the most common ethnographic research records used in this practice are the researcher's diary, notes taken during the didactic process, photographs, program development, student comments and especially video recordings. The question is, what to analyze in a music

class? Of the many available possibilities, the focus here will only be on *educative music performances*.

EMPs primarily deal with corporal actions that take place in a space (usually in a classroom) and are experienced by a group of people. In this regard, among others, attention must be paid to:

- The relationship between those performing the action and those perceiving the action, given that each party is subject to change and not part of a closed group.
- The physical space where the EMP takes place and how to best use it as a performative space of true artistic and educational interest.
- The performative actions themselves.
- Perception, from the point of view of its specific performativity.
- The learning which takes place during EMPs.
- ...

Therefore, similar to other performative disciplines (performing arts, performance studies), research necessarily turns to address aspects such as semioticity, materiality, mediality, aestheticism and morality (see Fischer-Lichte, 2004).

Semioticity

In every teaching context a dual nature is always present: the referential and the performative. The first has to do with the interpretation of the roles assigned to each participant (basically the roles of teacher and student), as well as actions, situations and relationships that take place in the classroom in respect to several specific curriculum contents through *educative music performances*. The performative nature, meanwhile, has to do with the practical implementation of actions (by teachers and students) and also with their immediate effects. These two functions work simultaneously. However while in traditional education emphasis weighs heavier on the referential, in PME the focus shifts towards the performative function so that, for example, the traditional border between educator and learner is blurred with the intention of producing more and better meanings as well as more and more meaningful lessons. For this reason, as commented above, the bodies of the people inside the classroom are not simply bodies (that listen to a verbal explanation by the teacher, take notes, process information or re-

quest permission to ask questions), but instead they can be reassigned, reinterpreted and recoded like musical instruments (that sing and/or create body percussion); like opera characters that experience problems and feelings similar to those which students might have in their own lives; like immigrants in a society which observes them with suspicion; like members of the LGBTI community¹³ who feel excluded by their peers; like messengers of peace during recess; like female victims of gender based violence; like political activists... all of these through music activities purposefully designed for each situation. It must be remembered that the meanings and lessons that take place in the classroom through EMPs arise as a result of certain “gambles”. Thus, it is through performative function that referential function is reached in the music classroom. These meaningful lessons are used in turn like elements of a “game” for future work in the class and hopefully go beyond classroom learning to be of use in the students’ lives outside of the school grounds.

Materiality

While materials and other objects used in the music classroom are also used with other subjects (for example sheet music, musical instruments, other sound making objects, music recordings and choreographies), in PME these artefacts are considered amongst others solely for their use in the context of a performative process. From a purely physical perspective, the aforementioned artefacts have important features for the development of EMPs such as spatiality (the volume and orientation of the piano, the distribution of chairs and Orff instruments in the classroom and location of the teacher’s desk), corporeality (the people who make up the class-group) and sonority (sound making material as a whole, including both objects and people). However, this *physical materiality* needs to be distinguished from the *performative materiality* that emerges from the class-group interaction between each other and with the material artefacts (moving, talking, singing and playing, as well as listening, feeling and looking). In other words, only through the performativization of physical materials in the music classroom is the spatiality, corporeality and sonority constructed, made perceptible and experienced.

13 Collective of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people.

Mediality

While the written text and/or the music score serve as the central core for perception, attention and class-group discussions in a music history class or a vocal or instrumental interpretation class, in PME the group-class's communication, attention and perception are results of the EMP conditions. Here, *production* and *reception* (of educational music sequences) not only occur simultaneously but also mutually condition each other due to the particular dynamics of face-to-face interaction where production flows are bidirectional (teacher \longleftrightarrow student[s]) and not only unidirectional (teacher \longrightarrow student[s]). Students and teacher can even negotiate performance norms; norms that are valid insofar as they are implemented (sometimes the rules can even be modified during the "game" if there is agreement on the change and the change is carried out).

Aestheticity

Throughout the majority of school curriculum areas (as well as in musicology studies) the student is expected to produce tangible results, for example written texts (in the student's language, in a foreign language, using the musical staff), solutions to specific problems (calculus, physics or chemistry, analysis of a musical work) or physical objects (in technology, visual arts). A PME, however, produces *events* and the emergence of these can sometimes be more important than what happens in general. From a teaching standpoint, a series of isolated music classes imparted at a specific hour is not what is important for students but that the continuity of classes offered provides opportunities to experience these emergences over time (hence the need for continuous music education for all students throughout compulsory schooling). In fact, many students may feel their first experiences lack meaning and may even question their "usefulness", especially in a society obsessed with results and almost disinterested in process. It is only when these experiences are gradually understood to be individually significant (i.e., to the extent that they progressively produce significant learning) that their importance will be understood. This is because in PME, activities are implemented for their aesthetic value, not as *artistic works* but

as *events*¹⁴, events that unleash power, make possible energy exchanges and facilitate diverse and changing groupings and where group cohesion is strengthened over time thanks to an array of socio-educational music activities.

Ethicality

Like any educational activity, PME has an intrinsic ethical component that is derived from the interactions between people. Without making explicit mention to the referential and performative dimensions in education, Huaquín Mora writes, “education is a practical activity by which educators shape students ethically through their behaviour and consistent attitudes, making teaching the imparting of what is morally right or good. At the same time, education is a theoretical activity that stimulates student’s natural curiosity to learn in a truly educational context; that is, the morally correct induces teachers to do what is intellectually valid or true” (Huaquín Mora, n. d.).

According to this author, then, it is the teacher’s responsibility to take up the ethic reins of the class. As most are aware, students have much to say and do with this topic as their presence in the classroom is far from passive. This is especially true bearing in mind the social character of a PME, as a class will become political if a teacher or student(s) try to impose on the other members of the class their particular musical tastes, personal views on a work or a composer, performer, or group; or the values which are transmitted by a particular style, genre or musical trend. Indeed, the EMP can be conceived of both as an aesthetic process and as a social, even political, process. PME challenges traditional dichotomies that have been established in music education between the musical and social (and also between the musical and political). PME classes always include in the broadest sense, musical/social/political elements, and it is from this space that ethical challenges arise in EMPs that cannot be ignored. Given that each member of the class-group is a co-participant and co-creator in the EMPs (albeit to different measures), everyone is jointly responsible for the development of the outcome, and both the teacher and the students must be aware of this.

¹⁴ Even in cases where specific teaching components might produce works in the traditional sense (compositions and collages, as well as concerts and recitals), PME is interested in the emerging processes of events created by doing the works, rather than the results of the works themselves isolated from the creation process.

5. Analysis of the educative music performance

As occurs in many situations, culture in general – and particularly in music – is something we are born into. Slowly it is incorporated in our bodies through successive repetitions throughout our life (festivals, rituals, the media, at school ...), to the point that it is assumed to be something natural instead of a social construct. Luckily, what has been performatively embodied, personified, and made our own, can also be reviewed, varied, rewritten and remodelled performatively to generate new meanings.

A semiotic analysis of the *educative music performance* would be one which looks at the way students process meaning-making; studying how from certain performative processes we conceive signs and attribute meaning to them (for example, certain sounds, sound environments and movements associated with specific music). Elements that cannot be understood as significant should not be taken into consideration. Semiotic analysis is interesting when it aims to describe and analyze the possible meanings that EMPs have for students, as a whole or in part, or even just one element of these. However, certain areas are not taken into account, such as the interaction between meaning and effect, the energy fields that arise and develop during the music teaching-learning process, the intersubjective relationships between participants when they are singing, dancing, playing instruments or improvising. It falls on performative analysis to investigate and explain these elements. Seitz expresses it as follows, “Faced with a semiotic interest that treats expressions of the body like readable text, the *pragmatic concerns* [...] seek in particular to investigate the effects and thereby sharpen perception” (Seitz, 2006: 34).¹⁵

Traditional music education, focused almost exclusively on the development of teaching materials and the production of new course material, has forgotten both semiotic and performative analysis in the implementation of these, which with conviction and dedication were once offered as novel. A good example of this is the case of the well-

¹⁵ „Gegenüber einem semiotischen Anliegen, das die Äußerungen des Körpers als lesbaren Text behandelt, sucht das [...] *pragmatische Anliegen* insbesondere die Wirkungen zu erforschen und dabei die Wahrnehmung zu schärfen.“

known and well-used active methodologies in music education. They focus almost exclusively on teaching music language through playful and participatory activities, leaving aside the scientific study of meaning and the relationship meaning/effect in the music classroom. Urgent investigation is needed on these and other aspects of educational and music practice as there are still many questions that 21st century music education needs answering. For example: How do the experiences of performative processes form youthful music identities? To what extent are students affected or transformed through a PME? How can the aesthetic experience provided by and through a music class be described and determined? Are these merely sensory experiences or does the experience go farther? Are the meanings students associate with sensory impressions a part of this experience ...?

Neither musicology nor curriculum theory can answer these nor other questions that performative music education is interested in. Thus, it is the task of this field to develop new research methods capable of understanding the purely performative in a music class, the intersection between the referential and performative functions (in other words, the significant and non-significant elements). This is particularly important in this field as, unlike a traditional class of music history or music analysis, the performative functions clearly prevail over the referential. Unlike classical methodologies in this field, through PME the contradictory experiences of students' daily lives must not be overlooked in the classroom (particularly on the difficult road to adulthood), nor should we ignore the walls of socio-cultural inequalities, the boundaries drawn by different youth aesthetics nor the dictates of not always successful educational laws that minimize (if not ridicule) the presence of the arts, dance and music in the education system. It is precisely these subjects that are in the best conditions to clearly show what really happens in the global, multimedialized and highly aesthetically idealized world of the present (see Rodríguez-Quiles, 2014b/2015).

In the case of dance, Seitz reminds us that “[w]here society radically encourages relationships with *competition, chance, staging skill* and the *ability* to experience, dance offers spectators a training ground where [...] not only can one experience competition, instability, loss of identi-

ty and meaning, but shows a seismographic¹⁶ inventory of what really matters to society and individuals. It not only represents what happens when the four principles of the game are out of control, but also when the boundaries between what is play and what is not are blurred” (Seitz, 2006: 37).¹⁷ Seitz’s considerations can be applied to the case of PME when the music room is transformed into a laboratory where students are not mere spectators, but co-participants and co-creators of the EMPs that are put in practice, playing with the German meaning of *spielen*, the double sense both to *play* (a musical instrument) and to *play* (itself). In fact, in music class the boundaries can also easily be blurred as alluded to by the German author, showing students the complex and rich sound/social/political kaleidoscope that societies are made of today, as well as suggesting new ways of addressing it in the future.

¹⁶ The adjective “seismographisch” is used with frequency in the German literature to refer to performative events, irregardless of the origin of these. The underlying idea behind this metaphor is to shake the foundation of the field in question thereby instigating new ways of its being addressed and conceptualized.

¹⁷ „Wo die Gesellschaft auf radikale Weise Umgang mit Wettbewerb, Zufall, Inszenierungsgeschick und Erlebnisfähigkeit fordert, bietet die Tanzkunst dem Zuschauer nicht nur ein Übungsfeld, auf dem [...] der Umgang mit Konkurrenz, Instabilität, Identitäts- oder Sinnverlust erlebbar wird, sondern zeigt in seismographischer Bestandsaufnahme, was in der Gesellschaft und den Individuen überhaupt vorgeht. Nicht nur wird dargestellt, was geschieht, wenn die vier Spielprinzipien außer Kontrolle geraten, sondern auch, wenn die Grenze zwischen Spiel und Nicht-Spiel fließend wird.“ (Italics in the original).

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