

The inaudible in music: Intervals and concordance

Sofia Partala, School of Eurythmy

Helsinki Finland



When listening to music we normally concentrate on what we can hear, but what happens between the hearable notes, is what makes music whole. Steiner says that what is truly musical is the space between the notes, that what we can not hear, but what we can experience in time between the notes.

Steiner says that just like the physical body is not the soul, the notes are not music. Notes are just the physical expression of the truly spiritual musical that is that which lies between the notes. The space between two notes in the pitch is called interval. Intervals have different qualities based on how far from each others the notes are in frequency.

The essence of the spiritual world is music, and every night when we sleep, our astral body leaves the physical body and enjoys being in the spiritual sphere, in the ocean of music, which is the true homeland of our souls. When we hear music in our waking time, we feel good, because it reminds us of what we experienced in the spiritual world.

When we listen to music, it's not the ears that hear it; the whole human being is experiencing it. The ears just give our etheric body the vibration and movement that the music has and which creates feelings in our astral body. In tone eurythmy, feeling is the most important thing. Music makes us feel and experience different things and we as eurythmists are making those feelings visible.

Steiner realised that the human body is built with musical principles. You can find the musical intervals in our bone structure. The inner musical lives in our chest area, in the center of the human, and the collarbone is which connects the chest and the arms that lead the way from the center out to the periferia. From the collarbones, the feeling flows through the bones of arms and hands and you are going more and more out of yourself when going towards the tips of your fingers, where you are the most out of yourself. In the eight intervals the first four are inwardly feelings and in the fifth you have the whole human, in the sixth you expand outward, in the seventh you are totally out of yourself and the octave calms you down back to the base, but gives a feeling of a next level and brightness.

In speech, the vowels are musical but consonants are not. When you say clearly out loud the main vowels, you can find that they are connected to the scale of C-major. CDEFGAH =UOAÖEYI. This is called concordance. In speech, you can find intervals between the vowels, just like between the notes of the musical scale.

