

Performing musical silence: markers, gestures, and embodiments Livingston, G.P.

Citation

Livingston, G. P. (2024, December 10). *Performing musical silence: markers, gestures, and embodiments*. Retrieved from https://hdl.handle.net/1887/4172020

Version: Publisher's Version

License: License agreement concerning inclusion of doctoral thesis in the

Institutional Repository of the University of Leiden

Downloaded from: https://hdl.handle.net/1887/4172020

Note: To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

Performing Musical Silence: Markers, Gestures, and Embodiments

Proefschrift

ter verkrijging van
de graad van doctor aan de Universiteit Leiden,
op gezag van rector magnificus prof.dr.ir. H. Bijl,
volgens besluit van het college voor promoties
te verdedigen op dinsdag 10 december 2024
klokke 13.00 uur

door

Guy Patrick Livingston

geboren te Knoxville, Tennessee, in 1967

Promotor

Prof. dr. Marcel Cobussen

Copromotor

Dr. Paul Craenen

Promotiecommissie

Prof. dr. Richard Barrett

Prof. dr. Rachel Beckles Willson

Prof. dr. Rokus de Groot (Universiteit van Amsterdam)

Prof. dr. Catharine Laws (University of York)

Dr. Anna Scott

Copyright Statement

Disclaimer: The author has made every effort to trace the copyright and owners of the illustrations and videos reproduced in this dissertation. Please contact the author if anyone has rights which have not been acknowledged.

This research is published online in the Research Catalogue and can be accessed through the following link: https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/1712958/2780572

Parts of this dissertation were previously published or presented as follows:

Chapter 4 on gestures in Cage originated with research I did with Szymon Hernik at the Royal Academy of Art (KABK) as a visual investigation into the bookends and symbols for silence. This was published in Warsaw as *Silence*|*Noise* (Livingston & Hernik, 2020).

Chapter 5 on gestures in Beethoven is based on research that I first presented at the 13th Society for Artistic Research (SAR) Conference at Bauhaus-Universität Weimar on July 2, 2022. Subsequently, I presented a newer version of this chapter at the 25th annual conference of the Dutch-Flemish Society for Music Theory in Amsterdam on March 2, 2024.

Acknowledgments

I would like to express major thanks to my PhD supervisors, Marcel Cobussen and Paul Craenen, to the members of my doctorate and examining committees, and to the administrative staff of the Academy of Creative and Performing Arts (ACPA), especially to Rosalien van der Poel. Thanks to the University of Leiden staff, notably Suzanne Knip-Mooij, Agnes and Rikki for moral support, and to Casper and Vincent for technical help. I am grateful to my colleagues on the PhD Student Council, especially Heloisa, Giuliano, and Maggie, who were unwavering in their solidarity.

My students at KABK and HKU have provided constant inspiration and created marvelous new worlds. To all the artists whose works I have used: I hope I have not misunderstood your creativity nor misrepresented your work in my search for silence. Thank you for letting me analyze and (re-)approach your music.

My initial research question was developed at the 2018 *Brutalism and Law Symposium* with help from Rose Sydney Parfitt, Sofia Stolk, Renske Vos, Kees Went, and Nele Brökelmann.

Special thanks to Kristin Anderson for editing and thoughtful reflection; Siamak Anvari for his window into online frames; Alexandra Arshanskaya for encouraging my pianoplaying next door; Alanna Battat for her continuing faith; Aletta Becker for creative strategy sessions; Galina Belenky for her spirited enthusiasm and passion for Russian pianism; Arie Jan van der Bom for perspectives on silence and spirituality; John Cage for his baffling stories and casually cheerful mentoring; Jelle Dierickx for inviting me to Zindering; Sophie Dunér for sending me Swedish silences; Eric Eliel for a helpful discussion; Christopher Elson for explaining Mallarmé; Farrell Farquhar for thoughtfulness on cognition; Anthony Fiumara for perspectives on electronic music; Jean-Charles François for his generously open composition; Kyle Gann for his remarkable knowledge of Cage.

Heartfelt thanks to Udo Garritzmann for discussions on architecture, music, and writing over sushi and beer; Sarah Gridley for tips on the poetics of silence; Eelco Grimm on room tone, anechoic chambers, and background noise; Anke Haarmann for welcoming me to PhDArts; Szymon Hernik for his creative ideas on framing; Gijs Hulscher for his friendship and his infinite brain; Anders Jallén for his cheerfulness in times good and bad; Pleuntje Jellema for *Luwteplekken*; Pamela Jordan for feedback on space and sound; Roosje Klap for moral support and chauffeuring the Kasslerettes in her Land Rover; Johan Kolsteeg for his mentorship; Phlyssa Koshland for practically everything; Doina Kraal for her outstanding eclecticism; Alice Lagaay for putting the wind back in my textual sails;

Paul Lehrman for enthusiastically re-arranging the *Ballet mécanique*; and to Yu Liang-Kai for a better understanding of Cage's personal silencings.

To Ned McGowan for urging me to join the ACPA program and mentoring me through ups and down, and for his humor and insight during our concerts; to Esther Marie Pauw for engaging with my craziest ideas and coaching me on Artistic Research, for improving my word-choice and calling out my inconsistencies, and all of that generously beyond the call of duty; to Ster Paschke(‡) in memory of our listening-together walks through Berlin; to the extraordinary artists of *Le Piano Ouvert*: Stéphane Leach, Marcos Pujol, Rayanne Dupuis, and Gaelle Quéven; to Mauro Piccinini for everything about Antheil; Virginie Platteau for her reflections on stillness; Maya Rasker for suggesting I write the dissertation as a *haiku*; Luis Rolo at the European Space Agency for insight on reflections; Kate and Antoine Rouille for discussions in the *forêt du Morvan*.

To Edgar Omar Rojas Ruiz for the vision that Beethoven's silences are a gift to the performer; Barbara Scales for masterfully handling the Zürich dossier; Shadman Shahid for welcoming me into the MAPS community; Jenna Sherry for the mushroom book; Aart Strootman for brainstorming on the boundaries of the frame; Meryl Tankard for finding new interpretations for loud silences; Lori Thicke for friendship and writing counsel; Alice Twemlow for research-method inspiration; Hans Venhuizen for suggesting the late-night solo concerts which became my festival of silence; Esther Venrooij for making silence visible; João Henrique Viegas for his wonderful videos; Maya Wada for sharing Japanese stillness; Don Weber for revealing the gigantic absences of the Port of Rotterdam; Alexander Zaklynsky for inventing the moon gallery; and to the dancers of the Zürich Ballet for spectacular embodiments.

To my family: Thanks to Hugh for his almost daily suggestions of silence links and new directions; Morna for encouragement and taking me to all those piano lessons; Lona and Philip for suggesting inspiringly oddball Japanese authors; John and Anna and Owen and Sophocles(‡) and Monica for sunny days at Old Chatham and conversations about Beethoven's family; to Marijke for much laughter; to Neale for recounting the origins of my grandfather's wooden "Silence" sign; and to Nick and Jaap for always having the bubbly ready.

This dissertation is dedicated to Maria and Renzo, and to Snocks, who knows the value of silence.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments	iv
Chapter 1. Introduction, Concepts, and Terminology	. 1
Chapter 2. Markers, Notations, Dimensions	31
2.1 Introduction	31
2.2 Potential Markers for Silence	32
2.3 Markers and Framing	53
2.4 Eloquent and Non-Eloquent Silences	56
2.5 Multidimensionalities of Silence	50
Chapter 3. A Noisy Archive of Eloquent Silences6	53
Part 1: Integrated Silences6	35
Part 2: Inherent Silence: Works Made of Silence	72
Part 3: Silent Discourse	75
Part 4: Silences that Arise from the Work or Context (Meta-Silences)	30
Part 5: Silencings	37
Chapter 4. Case Study: Audible Markers for Silences (John Cage's 4'33")	€3
4.1 The Checklist	€
4.2 Learning From the Waveforms	98
4.3 Attitudes of Silence in John Cage's 4'33"10)2
4.4 Updating the Checklist11	18
Chapter 5. Case Study: Visual Markers for Silences (Beethoven's opus 111)12	23
5.1 The Sonata	24
5.2 Examples: Picturing Silence Through Embodiments	30
5.3 Embodiments of Eloquent Silence14	14
5.4 Coda14	19
	50
6.1 On Ballet mécanique15	51
6.2 The Rests in <i>Ballet mécanique</i> 15	53
6.3 Performing Ballet mécanique with Ballet Zürich	52
6.4 Markers	56
Chapter 7. Conclusion16	58
7.1 Conceptual Contributions	70
7.2 Practical Contributions	71
7.3 Ideas for Future Research18	31
7.4 Coda18	35
Bibliography	37
Summary	99
Samenvatting20)2
Curriculum Vitae)7