

MUSIC EDUCATION AS THINKING IN SOUND

Summer Semester, 1985  
Tuesdays, 5:30 - 9:20

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. R. Walker  
LOCATION: MPX 7610

This course is for those who wish to broaden and deepen their understanding of music in order that their classroom teaching can be more precisely focussed.

Four areas of activity will comprise the organization of the course. These are: 1) the topics illustrating various theories of thinking in sound; 2) using sound in personal expression; 3) listening utilizing different theoretical bases; 4) Applications to education in music and general education.

1) Topics illustrating various theories of thinking in sound

- 1) Ancient Greek views of music
- 2) Christian intellectualism and the Western consciousness in music
- 3) Theories of symbols and signs - semiotics
- 4) Referentialists of the 19th Century
- 5) Objectivity in the 19th Century - Hanslick and the early psychobiologists
- 6) Langer - music as symbol of human feeling
- 7) Langer - music as significant form
- 8) Psychobiological views of music - 20th century behaviorism and music
- 9) Mental imagery research and music.
- 10) The present-day-music as a means of manipulation and music as art - the legacy of the greco-roman philosophers and the assimilation of different traditions in the use of music.

2) Using sound as personal expression

The purpose of this activity is to enable the student to explore the workings of different theoretical standpoints regarding music in order to experience him/herself the problems involved.

Various contemporary methods and schemes will be used. A knowledge of acoustics will form a part of the work in this segment, and the application of physical laws of pressure waves and their behavior to the various theories will be explored.

The basis of many of the theories concerns beliefs about the intrinsic meanings of physiognomic properties of sound. Modern science tends to refute such beliefs. The question of whether modern science has or has not destroyed much of the ancient meaning we have traditionally applied to music will be explored through direct contact with sound.

- 3) Throughout various musical examples will be played in order to demonstrate the musical products of various theories of musical meaning and function. These will range widely across time and national boundaries and cultures.

- 4) Discussion and readings related to the implications of the above for both musical and general education will form the basis of seminars and written work. Assessment will comprise a series of assignments throughout the course.

A significant part of the course will comprise practical work suitable for the classroom and the general music lesson.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

R. Walker. Music Education - Tradition and Innovation C.C. Thomas, 1984.

R. Walker. Sound Projects Oxford University Press, 1978.

J.B. Davies. The Psychology of Music., Stanford paperback, 1978.