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# **Nordisk musikkpedagogisk forskning Årbok 17**

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## The musical present: A polyphonic philosophical investigation

Sven Bjerstedt, Hanne Fossum, Susanna Leijonhufvud & Lia Lonnert<sup>1</sup>

### ABSTRACT

*How can music education be enriched by the concept of time? This article is based on the assumption that the present moment, the musical 'now', is of the utmost importance not only to the musical performer or listener but to the musical learner and teacher as well. It aims at a philosophical discussion and conceptual clarification of a number of issues of time that are considered to be crucial to music education through a presentation and discussion of thoughts and concepts put forward by four selected philosophers: Augustine, Edmund Husserl, Mikhail Bakhtin, and Paul Ricoeur. It is suggested that reflecting upon time may significantly challenge and develop students' ways of thinking about music connected to different actions within several fields of music education. For instance, Augustine's analysis of time offers important perspectives on practising, remembering, and performing music. Husserl's philosophy of time constitutes the stream of consciousness, which leads to an understanding of the comprehension of tonality. Discussions of Bakhtin's concepts of utterance and chronotope demonstrate that the need for experiencing and understanding music arguably poses a challenge for current music education in schools with regard to its predominant ways of dealing with time. With reference to Ricoeur's analysis of time and narrative, it is suggested that musicians' need for multidirectedness in the musical present calls for a rich learning ecology framework. In conclusion, it is argued that reflection on musical practice in general would benefit from taking the shape of polyphonic philosophical investigations.*

*Keywords: music education, philosophy of time, the musical present, time in music*

<sup>1</sup> Authors in alphabetical order.

## Introduction

The smallest unit of time in music, the present moment, the musical now, is arguably of utmost importance not only to the musical performer or listener, but also to the musical learner and teacher. The musical now is relevant for anyone—scholars, composers, etc.—concerned with the conceptions of music, musical performance and music education.

Time can be (objectively) measured, and time can be (subjectively) experienced. Therefore, an investigation of time in music must relate to the human *experience* of time. In other words, time is integrated into all human acts and experiences (Moe, 2010). Hence, time and experience are closely intertwined phenomena. This prompts the following question: How may different conceptions of music education be enriched by a philosophical approach to the concept of time and the experience of time in music?

Time, in a fundamental sense, is a given. However inescapable, time as a theoretical concept is elusive. The tension between experienced and mechanistic time—or between a subjective (relative, inner and contextualised) time and an objective (outer) time—can be found as a central underlying condition in different time concepts through the history of ideas and science, from Aristotle via Newton to late modernity's thinkers (Moe, 2010). Most notably, this tension appears in the ancient Greeks' two well-known notions of time, *chronos* and *kairos*, which denote measurable and experienced time, respectively. Since the human experience is a meaning-creating event, *meaning* also becomes a central aspect of many investigations of time.

In this article, we provide a philosophical discussion and conceptual clarification of a number of issues of time that we consider to be crucial to music education. In our opinion, research in music education has not devoted sufficient attention to such issues; thus, this investigation will contribute to the concept of time from a music education perspective. There are writings addressing time and temporality within music, especially concerning musical structure within the areas of music theory and harmonics (see Barry, 1990). There are also studies that deal with the temporal nature of music as such, or in connection with other issues. For instance, with reference to Bergson's concept of *la durée*—the duration—the Swedish composer and scholar Hans Gefors (2011) investigated the double, simultaneous time aspects of the musical drama, stressing the importance of distinguishing between the now—a specific moment—and the flow of time. The Norwegian music philosopher Arild Pedersen (2001, 2003) developed the concept of *singing time*, which he claims is relevant as a part of a general theory of interpretation. Pedersen challenges the traditional dualistic view of *chronos* and *kairos* by claiming that beside *chronos* (mechanical time) and duration (experienced time), *kairos* represents a third sense of time typical of art and

religion that is characterised by being a 'formed' project with 'charged' moments—a singing time. Pedersen compares singing time with the time of narratives in religion and literature, which typically has a beginning that prefigures the end, a middle part that connects the beginning and the end, and an end that gathers all previous moments. Norwegian music educator and scholar Tony Valberg (2011) treats the concept of time in music within the scope of the development of a 'relational music aesthetics' for use in classical orchestras' pedagogical outreach for children. He investigates the present now as a specific moment of aesthetic experience. None of these studies, however, have addressed the specific question of how the present now in music can be of relevance to the field of music education.

Most of the examples we use to illustrate our investigation involve Western classical music and jazz, in part because some of the philosophers we refer to use classical music, or terminology associated with this kind of music, to illuminate their argument. Thus, it could be assumed that our conceptions of music and music education must be understood in the most traditional sense, and that we take for granted that the Western classical model with its own pedagogical traditions, as well as an elitist, Western jazz tradition, represent the superior, 'real' conceptions of music and music education. However, even if conceptions of music and music education are often closely connected to specific musical spheres and traditions, we refuse to be placed within certain categories or conceptions just because of our institutional backgrounds and choice of examples. We regard it as quite usual that music educators and scholars in today's pluralistic world have more multi-stratified and nuanced conceptions of music and music education than that. In our view, it is time to depart from the dichotomous notions that have dominated the music education discourse since the 1990s, where it seems to be assumed that music educators swear by, for example, either a 'praxialist' or an 'aesthetic' position. We believe that it is possible to find a common territory between these positions (Fossum & Varkøy, 2013). Fundamentally, we must all depart from ourselves—from the places we occupy in the world. This implies that we can (and should) only represent ourselves (Spivak, 1988). However, this does not mean that we cannot understand or speak to other positions.

Similarly, the philosophical and theoretical perspectives we have chosen may indicate certain epistemological positions. We do not find the gaps between these positions problematic; rather, they highlight the pluralist position that emerges through the polyphonic design. According to this pluralist, polyphonic position, we aim at a basic understanding of the implications of the musical now as it emerges in different actions in music education regardless of musical style and conceptual orientation. We regard our readings of the four philosophers, as well as the insights we try to illustrate through examples from classical music and jazz, to be applicable to different music

educational conceptions and practices. Further, our aim is not to provide answers to specific questions; rather, it is to arrive at a number of new questions that may prompt an extended understanding of the foundations for music education in all of its variations. In this article, we attempt to enrich music education with new perspectives through making acquaintances with a diversity of philosophical comprehensions of the present moment of time in music. Several philosophers have discussed fundamental issues of time – here, we present the thoughts and concepts of four key philosophers: Augustine, Edmund Husserl, Mikhail Bakhtin, and Paul Ricoeur.

### A polyphonic design

In individual presentations of these concepts, we unfold our individual author voices in our respective parts. In other parts of the article, the voices merge, as is usual in academic literature written by more than one author. This dialogic and pluralist design, which is inspired by Mikhail Bakhtin's dialogism (Bakhtin, 1981) and his notion of *polyphony*, allows for a multi-faceted view of the article's main topic. From the unique place each of us occupies in existence, which is shaped by our respective research interests, knowledge and experiences, there are things only one of us can see. This provides the text with a "surplus of seeing", which is Bakhtin's term for the plenitude of vision that is central to his dialogism (Holquist, 1990: 36).

Bakhtin ([Bachtin], 1984)<sup>2</sup> develops the concept of polyphony, which is borrowed from music and literally means 'multiple voices', in *Problems of Dostoevsky's poetics*. According to Bakhtin, Dostoevsky's work contains a number of different voices, characters, viewpoints, and philosophies. These are not merged into a single perspective and are not subordinated to the monologic, unified design of the author and his encompassing authorial knowledge. Each of these voices has its own perspective, its own validity, and its own narrative weight within the novel. Thus, none of the voices represent an authoritative truth or become the last word. In Bakhtin's view, such a definitive and finalised truth does not exist—the search for truth is an unceasing process. Dostoevsky's new novelistic form is "a design for discourse; a great dialogue of interacting voices, a polyphony" (Morris, 1994: 89).

Even though the notion of polyphony stems from the theory of the novel, we find it highly relevant to philosophical inquiry, which has a long tradition of being developed through dialogue and discourse—most prominently by Plato. Not only does the polyphonic approach carry a dialogic potential, but the concept of polyphony also points to a core insight of sociocultural epistemology: meaning and truth are

<sup>2</sup> This edition uses the German spelling: Bachtin.

constituted socially. Bakhtin brings this to the point: "Truth is not born nor is it to be found inside the head of an individual person, it is born *between people* collectively searching for truth, in the process of their dialogic interaction" (Bakhtin [Bachtin], 1984: 110).

In the following sections, each author presents, discusses and compares a number of concepts and lines of thought put forward by the four philosophers. Augustine's notion of time is presented first, as he can be regarded as the prominent figure in this context upon which all of the others have, in one way or another, based their philosophy of time. Edmund Husserl cherishes but enhances Augustine's legacy. Mikhail Bakhtin, with his notions of *utterance* and *chronotope*, points to how the time span of an aesthetic experience is neither measurable in terms of duration nor by linguistic concepts; rather, it is constituted through emotional-volitional meaning. Paul Ricoeur ends the polyphony by addressing the narrativisation of a threefold now. In the concluding section of the article, we suggest and discuss a number of possible implications of these attempts at conceptual clarification, especially with regard to music education.

### Time and the extendedness of the mind (Augustine)

Augustine's (AD 354–430) reflections on time in *Confessions* are relevant for discussing the concepts of time and music. The questions he asks are as important today as they were in his own time; they are insolvable and relevant for performing music.

#### Concepts of time

Central to Augustine's (n.d.) description are time and the present—the now. There is a division that is often attributed to Augustine in which time can be divided into past, present, and future. However, he polemicalises against this division and claims that "it might be said rightly that there are three times: a time present of things past; a time present of things present; and a time present of things future" (Augustine, n.d., Book 11, Chapter XX, No 26). According to Augustine, all three times exist in this 'now'. Herman Hausheer (1937) argues that Augustine's now is an instant that is not possible to divide into smaller parts. Augustine continues: "For these three do coexist somehow in the soul, for otherwise I could not see them. The time present of things past is memory; the time present of things present is direct experience; the time present of things future is expectation" (Augustine, n.d., Book 11, Chapter XX,

No 26). When using our memory, we think about something that happened, we have direct experience of the present, we observe the present, and we plan for the future. However, we do all of these things in the present.

Augustine's investigation of time emerges from a theological standpoint in which time can be seen from two distinct perspectives. Here, the concept of time is important in order to understand creation. To God, according to Augustine, there is no time—only an eternal 'now'. The variable time aspect can only be applied to creation—not to the creator. This distinction is not commonly used today—concepts closer to the Greek *chronos* and *kairos* are more usual. Bertrand Russell (1915) describes this view by distinguishing between *mental time* and *physical time*, emphasising that these two should not be confused. Mental time is sensation and memory, which give time relations between object and subject. Physical time is simultaneity and succession, which give time relations among objects. Russell claims the following:

[i]t will be seen that past, present, and future arise from time-relations of subject and object, while earlier and later arise from time-relations of object and object. In a world in which there was no experience there would be no past, present or future, but there might well be earlier and later. (Russell, 1915: 212)

Thus, only a subject can experience the past, present and future. Russell's distinction might be used as criticism against Augustine's reflections on time, but from Augustine's point of view, physical time is dependent upon mental time—a subject must experience the time-relations between objects. These time-relations must be meaningful. Augustine points out the following contradiction: on one hand, time can be measured, but on the other hand, time is subjective and connected to the person who experiences it and thus is not possible to measure.

### Time and space

Time is not the same as space. Augustine claims that space and time are often confused; he exemplifies this with a poem. If a poem is measured by its length, then it is space and not time that is measured. The amount of stanzas or syllables may be measured as long or short, but a poem may be read quickly or slowly. Thus, measured space is not necessarily the same as measured time. This also applies to most music because music shares the same features as a poem; it can be written down as a score, but when performed, it can be played quickly or slowly.

Another example Augustine gives is a sounding voice: before it sounds, it cannot be measured—it does not exist; when it sounds, it cannot be measured—it is a now; after it has sounded, it cannot be measured—it is past. Thus, possibly, it is only the 'now' that exists and that can be measured. On the other hand, it cannot be measured because the now is a passing movement and has no extension. If it is extended, it can be divided into past and future. The present has no length. Augustine observes that the present must be in motion; otherwise, it would not be time, but eternity. The 'now' is the moment in which the future moves into the past.

Today, we have recording devices, which did not exist when Augustine wrote *Confessions*. We can, sometimes, measure time that has passed. We may know if a sounding voice sounded for 30 seconds—but only when it is a past. We have other devices that make it possible to measure the future. For example, if we record a sounding voice, we might know for how long it will sound if we played the recording. Thus, we know how to measure the future, or our expectation of the future. On the other hand, we do not know if the device is slightly too slow or if the tape will break down when we listen to it. We only know these things in the 'now' or as a past. Chronos time does not apply to the present now because it is without extension. Hausheer (1937: 504) maintains, from an Augustinian perspective that "what we measure is the absence of the present." From an Augustinian viewpoint, recording devices can be seen as measuring space, not time.

### Performing in a now

Augustine illustrates the process of change in the present and the complexity of different aspects of time in the process of reciting a psalm:

I am about to repeat a psalm that I know. Before I begin, my attention encompasses the whole, but once I have begun, as much of it as becomes past while I speak is still stretched out in my memory. The span of my action is divided between my memory, which contains what I have repeated, and my expectation, which contains what I am about to repeat. Yet my attention is continually present with me, and through it what was future is carried over so that it becomes past. The more this is done and repeated, the more the memory is enlarged—and expectation is shortened—until the whole expectation is exhausted. Then the whole action is ended and passed into memory. And what takes place in the entire psalm takes place also in each individual part of it and in each individual syllable. This also holds in the



even longer action of which that psalm is only a portion. (Augustine, n.d., Book 11, Chapter XXVIII, No 38)

This, says Augustine, also applies to the whole life. Even though this example describes the reciting of a psalm, it may also apply to music-making. Through this process, the relationship between the whole and the parts, as well as the importance of the present and the different aspects of time, are emphasised. When performing, the future—the expectation—is based on the past—the memory. On the other hand, the present will change the future and thus the memory.

Manning, Cassel, and Cassel (2013) suggest an extension of Augustine's reflections on the temporal dimensions by using Sartre's reflections. Sartre claims that we do not only have one past, one present, and one possible future, but that we have several—these temporal dimensions are constantly in a process of change. Manning, Cassel, and Cassel (2013: 240) maintain that "we are continuously reorganizing the past, present and future, that is, forgetting, restoring and imagining events." Sartre (1943: 499) states the following: "[t]hus, the order of my future choices will determine the order of my past, and this order is by no means chronological." When performing music, the expectation is not only about the future, but also about the past. The memory is not only dependent on the past, but also on the future.

Søren Frimodt-Møller (2010) addresses norms and the coordination of musicians who perform together. Not only is the musical performance based on common knowledge, as rules or norms, but also on expectations of how oneself and others will perform. The coordination when playing music together with others is thus based on a combination of memory, observation, and expectation. In a musical performance, the coordination between the musicians is based on these aspects of time. In a recent study, Lonnert (2015) describes, from an Augustinian perspective, how professional orchestral musicians must handle complex temporal considerations when performing. Musicians must share the norms, remember the common knowledge and remember agreements (e.g. from the rehearsal). Musicians must observe what happens in the moment—for a musician, this primarily means to listen. Listening is, to a musician, *the now*—observation of the moment as a conscious act. Musicians must base what they play on how each individual musician expects others to play. The coordination of musicians is based on each musician's expectation—it is dependent on the whole and the parts simultaneously. Augustine also identifies these aspects: the subjective experience, the intertwining of different aspects of time, the relationship of the parts and the whole, and the need to be aware of the present.

## Extension of the mind

Augustine struggles with contradictions: time that cannot be measured and at the same time can be measured, and the now that has no extension and at the same time is extendedness. What, then, is it an extendedness of? Augustine (n.d.) suggests that it is an extendedness of the mind. In the mind, the past, the present and the future coexist. As suggested here, a music performer must use this extendedness of the mind while performing. Not only should the intertwined future, past and the present be used in the 'now' of performance, but also each 'now' should be seen as part of the musical entity.

According to Nordin (1995/2003), one of Augustine's major contributions is the notion of the subjective: the human being's subjective experience as a thinking and acting subject. Consequently, Augustine (n.d.) uses this in his reflections, both by using his own subjectivity as a philosopher and by describing the subjectivity of the experiencing human being. Augustine (n.d.) uses music in his writings as examples. These examples show music as a human, subjective expression of time.

## Augustine as inspiration

Augustine's contribution to the discussions on time is the importance of the present, which changes all time aspects—past, present, and future. These aspects of time are so intertwined and complex that the division between past, present and future might not even make sense.

Augustine's reflection on what time is to human beings poses questions that go beyond his theological standpoint and into philosophical reflections. Marc-Wogau (1983) describes Augustine's text on time as containing two aspects: the theological question and the concept-analytical question. The concept-analytical approach, where the concept is seen from different angles, can inspire a philosophical approach to all aspects of musical performance. Augustine's very personal approach to philosophical questions also promotes a personal reflection of the reader. His struggle with the definition of an elusive concept—by posing questions, providing examples and suggesting possible models for thinking—is inspiring. Music is also an elusive concept.



## The intrinsic temporality of music (Edmund Husserl)

Edmund Husserl, a prominent figure in modern phenomenology, inherits the tradition that Augustine represents concerning the notion of subjective and objective time as two incommensurable entities, and Husserl, in line with Augustine, regards the former, the subjective experience, to be a prerequisite for the latter, the objective time. By investigating time, Husserl pays attention to the phenomenon of music. Music, understood as a phenomenon constituted in and by temporality, is a suitable choice when understanding time according to Husserl. From a perspective of music education, this phenomenological investigation of time can also aid our understanding of the comprehension of the phenomenon of music *per se*.

### Different phenomena of time

Husserl distinguishes between experienced *phenomenological time* and objective *cosmic time*. A significant aspect of phenomenological time following Augustine, in comparison with cosmic time, is that phenomenological time cannot be measured by the position of the sun in the sky or by any other physical means (Husserl, 1913/2004: 228–231). In this section, we summarise Husserl's phenomenological analysis of time and further suggest what his philosophical reasoning can teach us about how it is possible to comprehend musical phenomena such as melody and harmony.

According to Husserl, the moment of time we know as a 'now' should not be understood as a one-dimensional singularity but rather as a two-dimensional phenomenon stretching out between *retention* and *protention*. Husserl claims that the singularity of the now cannot be understood without its extension between a recapture of the past and without a reach toward the future. The now is not a line of division between past and soon—it is more of a centre of tension. Within the two intrinsic qualities, embedded in the 'now', the progressive tension between *re-* and *pro-* constitutes a *direction* of consciousness as a *stream* in motion. The experience of music, more precisely, musical tones in a sequence, is used as an example to investigate this stream of consciousness and hence the progression of time. Husserl concludes that, considering how tones are presented in their givenness, consciousness cannot be understood as a sequence of disjointed moments but rather as a continuous stream, "a necessary form of conjunctions between experiences" (Husserl, 1913/2004: 228–231, our translation).

## Music as a temporal phenomenon

Music claims space; this space is, for one thing, an extension of time. This extension, according to Husserl, is stretched in a moment of tension between the past and the future—a width of presence. Husserl describes the tones of a melody to explain this abstract thinking:

...the same tone that previously existed as a real now is yet the same, but it moves back into the past and constitutes thereby the same objective moment of time. And if the tone does not cease, but lingers, and throughout that duration appears as substantial the same or substantial changeable, can we not then by evidence (within certain limits) grasp this—that it lasts or changes? (Husserl, 1907/1989: 102, our translation)

Leaving several other aspects of music aside, in his attempt to study the phenomenon of music in order to understand time, Husserl focuses on melody. He explains how tones in a melody do not replace each other abruptly as discrete entities when they are brought into existence; instead, he understands the sequence of a melody as what we can verbalise as tones to come, being pre-presented, and tones that were, being post-presented, in the tone of presence. In a Husserlian vocabulary, this means that tones that have sounded present themselves from their givenness in the past because they are accumulating in a sedimentary phase of the present tone presented in the now. The now is then understood as a temporal unit that arises, persists, and perishes. The second tone is presented with regard to the first tone, and simultaneously, *in* the first tone. The second tone perishes in a stream of experiences, "ein Erlebnisstrom" (Husserl, 1913/2004: 228–231). This reasoning is based on the experiences of how musical tones linger and fade rather than disappear from our consciousness (Husserl, 1907/1989: 51–55). As their presence fades, they are not primarily remembered; rather, they are co-presented, but in a different mode compared to their prime givenness.

### The width of presence

Husserl understands this moment of 'now' as a phenomenon of width. He states that the punctual now is a width of presence (Zahavi, 2003: 82). The prominent Danish phenomenologist Dan Zahavi illustrates Husserl's reasoning with a picture (Figure 1) in which the primal impression (A) correlates to the now phase O2, the retention B correlates to the past phase O1 and the protention C correlates to the future phase O3 of the object. In an analysis of the primal impression of the now, the dimensions

of retention and protention are synthesised as a width (i.e. the distance between O1 and O3). In Zahavi's model, B and C are presented *simultaneously* as A, and *not in sequence* with A. Therefore, retention and protention should not be regarded as a *recollection* and an *expectation*, but as co-presented modes of changing givenness from the earlier primal impressions of the past tones in the musical sequence. More precisely, the B should perhaps be visualised as a B' and the C as 'C.

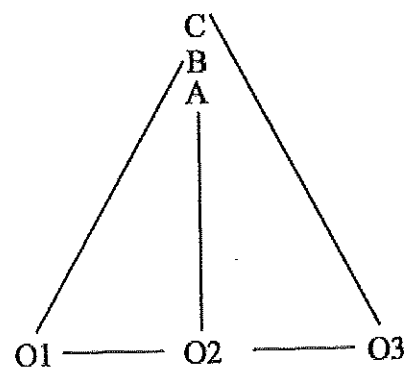


Figure 1. The relation between the primal impression-retention-protention and the different temporal phases of the object (Zahavi, 2003: 84).

### Tonal character constituted by the width of presence

Husserl's investigation of time is based upon music. What type of understanding of music does he hold? Husserl wrote his investigation of time in 1905 (Bornemark, 2011: 75–88). This makes his ideas relevant for music based on traditional Western harmony, but not for atonal music that occurred as an avant-garde in the decade after his writings. His description of music is restricted to a modal melody. Husserl displays an understanding of music in which the width of presence presents a primal impression A, a tone in a sequence of tones, on the background of earlier sounded tones such as B (Figure 1). The tone at the moment of O2 is co-presented, as it does not disappear from the consciousness, but rather vanishes and fades into a sedimentary experience of that tone. If a triplet from the dominant of a C is played (e.g. C, D and E), once getting to the E in that sequence, the D as well as the C linger in their sedimentary givenness and are hence co-presented *in* the E (and not *with* the E).

Even if musical tones can be expressed one after another as discrete entities, according to Husserl, they cannot be experienced as such. This understanding of how the

consciousness experiences the now as a width of presence, where previously played tones are co-presented as their presence lingers in the present tone, 'filling' the present tone with something that could be described as a character of the tones in the previous past reveals a traditional Western view of harmonic music. We suggest that it is possible to interpret Husserl's thinking into an example where the C and D in this case provide the E with a certain E character, given the previous tones. Maybe we can understand this extension of presence not only as a temporal dimension, but also as a spatial dimension. Husserl's understanding of consciousness could, in this way, provide us with an understanding of how it is possible to distinguish a C from a B# or a Dbb.

These ideas of temporality as a width of presence presuppose the possibility of experiencing a sequence. Therefore, we would suggest that the width of presence as the now could also presuppose other musical phenomena with intrinsic tensions such as melody, harmonic sequences, tonality, and form. It might also open up an understanding of the plasticity, or malleability, in the experience of the now. We suggest that experiences of tempo, timing, the fermata, or the ad lib could all be comprehended by acknowledging Husserl's width of presence.

### Music as a multi-presented phenomenon

Husserl does not pay particular attention to an investigation of the phenomenon of music as such. Rather, music is a means to understand time and consciousness, and furthermore, intentionality (Husserl, 1913/2004; Zahavi, 2003). When music is understood as a temporal phenomenon with moments of width stretched between retention and protention, this may enable us to understand how it is possible to experience different phenomena of temporality within music. Time can be experienced multi-layered and yet simultaneously, like a plurality of intentionalities. Husserl briefly elaborates on this concept of the parallelism of intentionalities by considering the phenomenon of love. He states that it is possible for a mother to love all of her children at the same time as she loves each and every one of them (i.e. her intentionality of love is multi-directed) (Husserl, 1913/2004: 321–323). Leijonhufvud, (2011: 60–61) suggests that this idea plays an important role in the understanding of music as a multi-layered time phenomenon. We can, for instance, be aware of playing within a time-based musical structure, in a certain tempo, and in the same stream of consciousness hold a fermata without losing the comprehension of the other two temporalities present at the same moment of presence.

Husserl's idea of consciousness as a continuous stream based on *tension*, between retention and protention, could perhaps provide a way of understanding the phenomenon of musical harmony or disharmony. The temporal extension of the now could

suggestively be understood as augmented—intertwined with a spatial dimension of harmonic chords in order to understand music as a width of harmony. Music will then also be understood as a two-dimensional phenomenon constituted by tensions within a width of presence and a width of space.

### The musical now as a meaningful event (Mikhail Bakhtin)

As already indicated in the introduction, an investigation of the musical now includes a study of the human experience of this now. Central to music education is the notion of musical experience. In this section, Bakhtin's (1981, 1986) thinking will serve as a theoretical and philosophical lens for studying the musical experience as a musical now. We will link this investigation to the discussion of musical experience as aesthetic and existential experience in Scandinavian scholarly literature (Varkøy, 2010; Pio & Varkøy, 2012; Fossum & Varkøy, 2013; Fossum, 2015). The Scandinavian treatment of this issue is again influenced by German aesthetics and the tradition of *Bildung*—particularly, by the 'pedagogy of encounter'—which is rooted in existential philosophy (Bollnow, 1959).

One distinctive feature of the phenomenon of musical experience as encounter is its event quality, which is often marked by instantaneousness. By listening to (or participating in) music, a person may all of a sudden, without being able to predict or control this, have the experience of being touched or even hit in his or her inner being. This experience may change this person, throw him or her out of the line of development he or she has followed until this point and require him or her to reorient him or herself (Bollnow, 1959). Such formulations reverberate descriptions of the notion of *Bildung*, which involves the "transformation of basic representations of the self and the world" (Koller, cited in Vogt, 2012: 20, our translation).

French author Eric-Emmanuel Schmitt describes such a momentous musical experience in his self-biographical and highly personal book *Ma vie avec Mozart*. Schmitt describes how the music that Mozart "sent him" changed and even saved his life: "Un jour, pendant l'année de mes quinze ans, il m'a envoyé une musique. Elle a modifié ma vie. Mieux: elle m'a gardé en vie. Sans elle, je serais mort" ("One day, in the year when I was fifteen, he sent me some music. It changed my life. Or, more precisely, it saved my life. Without it, I would be dead") (Schmitt, 2005: 5). This encounter with Mozart's music made him, a troubled 15-year-old, stop thinking about taking his own life. On this day, Schmitt had happened upon a rehearsal of *The marriage of Figaro*. He felt like he was being carried into a timeless and weightless condition and lifted up,

floating under the ceiling of the opera building. Through Countess Almaviva's voice, Mozart made him realise that it would be foolish to leave a world that contained such marvels and beauty. The mature Schmitt continued to experience Mozart's music in the same momentous way. He was always taken by surprise by these fulgurous encounters: in a concert, on a street corner, in the departure lounge at the airport. These moments of beauty enabled Schmitt to wonder about and rethink the world—they made life worth living for him (Schmitt, 2005).

Accordingly, the musical now could be viewed as a moment of significant communication—a moment intensely charged with meaning. This view is close to Pedersen's (2003) interpretation of *kairos* time, which, as we have seen, is characterised by charged moments. Here, 'meaning' is not to be understood merely in terms of intellectual activity, but rather in a wider sense, involving emotions and values and being closely connected to identity formation and human agency (DeNora, 2000; Ehrenforth, 2009a; Ruud, 2013). Accordingly, 'meaningful' should not be understood as synonymous to 'rational'—which could indicate that immediate, non-verbal, sensory aspects, or 'presence effects' (which often have a direct link to our emotions), would not play a role in the musical experience. According to Gumbrecht (2004), aesthetic experience is constituted by an oscillation between 'meaning effects' and 'presence effects'. The notion of *meaningful time* includes both effects. This will be investigated in the following in relation to Bakhtin's (1981, 1986) notions of utterance and chronotope.

### The 'elastic' temporality of the utterance—and of the experience

According to Bakhtin (1986), the basic unit of communication is not a linguistic or grammatical unit like a word or a sentence; instead, it is a unit of communication of meaning, which he calls an utterance. An utterance may be as small as one word or as extensive as a whole novel, which gives it a sort of 'elastic' temporality. An utterance may even be wordless, as in Bakhtin's view expressive acts and gestures are also utterances (Bakhtin, 1986). A complete utterance has certain characteristics, of which only two of the most relevant to this investigation will be mentioned. First, the utterance is marked by a semantic fullness of value (i.e. by being meaningful). Second, an utterance is stratified from within with emotional accents and intentions (Bakhtin, 1986, 1993). In our view, these features point toward one not-so-often emphasised, but still central, insight by Bakhtin: language is not in the first place constituted by linguistic concepts such as grammar but by human agency and expressivity (Bakhtin, 1981).

We suggest viewing the experience and the utterance as closely related phenomena because listening, understanding and speaking are interdependent—they are two types of the same action, and they even overlap: "Any understanding is imbued with

response . . . the listener becomes the speaker . . . Any speaker is . . . a respondent" (Bakhtin, 1986: 69). The experience is a result of listening and understanding; it is part of the human meaning-making potential.

The instant encounter experience is arguably, in the same way as the utterance, one of the smallest and temporally shortest units of communication. Accordingly, the experience seems to have the same type of 'elastic' temporality as the utterance. If it is true that the utterance is not in the first place temporally constituted by any linguistic, grammatical concept, but rather by being stratified from within with emotional value and charged with human meaning, the same thing may be said about the experience, and, especially relevant in this context, about musical experience.

Seeing the musical experience in this way could be connected to Frede V. Nielsen's (1998: 127ff, 2006: 166) concept of 'music as a multi-dimensional universe of meaning.' Nielsen, who is influenced by the German *Bildung* tradition, and, like Bakhtin, by existentialist thought, claims that music is imbued with different layers of meaning that correspond to similar layers in the experiencing person. In the encounter between a human being and music, various and intermingling layers are activated depending on the person's life situation and *Befindlichkeit* (state of mind) (Heidegger, 2001). The innermost layers in Nielsen's encounter model are the emotional and existential layers—when these are activated, they lead to an existential experience. To have such experiences means, in line with Bollnow (1959), being touched or hit in our innermost being through the power of music in a way that brings us into contact with fundamental, existential questions such as the meaning of life, hope, time, belonging, coherence, etc. We may thereby realise aspects of our lives that we otherwise do not notice, that often evade language and that we cannot control. Such experiences may cause us to know our own selves from unfamiliar angles. It is evident that Nielsen sees music as stratified from within with emotions and values in a similar way as Bakhtin sees the utterance.

### The chronotope

Closely linked to the utterance is the chronotope ('time space'). The term is borrowed from Einstein's theory of relativity, and it expresses the inseparability of time and space in aesthetic artifacts, first of all, in literature (Morris, 1994: 184). According to Bakhtin, the chronotope is the organising centre for the novel's narrative events. In it, "the knots of narrative are tied and untied", and to it "belongs the meaning that shapes narrative" (Bakhtin, 1981: 250). Meaning itself is chronotopic, as "every entry into the sphere of meanings is accomplished only through the gates of the chronotope" (Bakhtin, 1981: 258). In short, one could say that the chronotope is a time space

that is constituted by meaning. Since to Bakhtin something *exists* only if it *means* (Holquist, 1990), the chronotope arguably brings ideas and the human sense of life into existence. In the chronotope, "spatial and temporal indicators are fused into one carefully thought-out, concrete whole. Time, as it were, thickens, takes on flesh, becomes artistically visible" (Bakhtin, 1981: 84). Thus, the chronotope functions as a means for materialising time in space and as a force that gives body to the novel. All of the novel's abstract elements, as its ideas and philosophical generalisations, "gravitate toward the chronotope and through it take on flesh and blood, permitting the imaging power of art to do its work" (Bakhtin, 1981: 250). The artistic chronotope is—as the utterance—always coloured by emotions and values (Bakhtin, 1981: 243).

Where is the chronotope located? Is it to be found in artistic or musical work or in real life? Bakhtin's universe comprises both the chronotopes of the real world, "actual, historical chronotopes" (Bakhtin, 1981: 85), and those of the (in artworks) represented world. However, it is not the case that one term directly reflects or expresses the other. Rather, in Bakhtin's view, art and life interact and overlap in complex ways.

Bakhtin is not dealing with the chronotope in areas of culture other than literature, but his frequent use of metaphors borrowed from music, such as polyphony and voice (Bakhtin [Bachtin], 1984), indicates that he considers meaning in language to be analogous to meaning in music.

Bakhtin distinguishes between different types of chronotopes, but they are all constituted through different values, emotions and events that are crucial to human identity formation. According to Bakhtin, the chronotope determines the image of man in literature and the sense of human life to a certain time on a certain place (Morris, 1994: 180).

There is, for example, the "chronotope of encounter", which is marked by a high degree of intensity in emotions and values. Another example is the "chronotope of adventurertime", "a time of exceptional and unusual events . . . determined by chance, which . . . manifest themselves in fortuitous encounters" and that "leave a deep and irradicable mark on man himself and on his entire life" (Bakhtin [Bachtin], 1984: 92, 116). The "adventure novel of everyday life" (Bakhtin, 1981: 115) is a third example that is interesting to this investigation. In this chronotope, time is structured around moments of biographical crisis, which show "how an individual becomes other than he was" (ibid.). It is evident that meaningful time is involved in all these chronotopes. Similarly, instant or 'timeless' musical encounter experiences have the potential of being felt as meaningful time. Such musical experiences may be crucial to a person's identity formation and to his or her entire life, as in Schmitt's case. In sum, we suggest that both the utterance and the chronotope can be fruitful concepts for understanding the quality and meaning of present time in music, such as in musical experience.

## Musical improvisation as the narrativisation of a threefold now with reference to Paul Ricoeur's theory of narrative

In this section we attempt to show how Paul Ricoeur's theory of narrative affords a means of understanding a number of temporal phenomena that are typical of musical improvisation. In this section, based on Ricoeur's theory of narrative, a temporal model of musical improvisation with special reference to jazz is introduced. Building on a more extensive presentation in Bjerstedt (2014), a tripartite temporal model of musical improvisation will be introduced, inspired by Paul Ricoeur's theory of narrative. This model was used in a recent investigation that included extensive qualitative interviews with 15 Swedish jazz musicians (Bjerstedt, 2014). This section includes attempts to probe into aspects of time by building on both the temporal model and on the interviews.

In musical improvisation, there is an intensification of the present. Often, there must also be an awareness of past-future dimensions. This points to the need for *multidirectionality* in the musical improviser's attention. Arguably, it may be fruitful to compare musical improvisation in this respect to other kinds of communicative activities. In the jazz tradition, this seems to be the case with the 'storytelling' perspective, which is often ascribed to jazz improvisation. Conversely, Stephen Nachmanovitch (1990: 17) suggests an interesting perspective on the interrelations between musical improvisation and communicative activity in general with his statement that every conversation is "a form of jazz." Jazz musician and jazz educator David Liebman points to the importance of the present moment in jazz improvisation. Liebman (1996: 159) emphasises the need for a spatial-mental multidirectionality in the improviser's attention: "I stress in my teaching the act of looking outward at the same time that you are looking inward to find your own expressive way." However, a lot is occurring not only *in* every single moment but also *over* time. Jazz musician and jazz educator Ed Sarath (1996: 19) claims that the jazz improviser must have the capacity to conceive of the framework "both in a moment-to-moment manner and as a teleological (past-present-future) structure." The need for temporal multidirectionality in the musical improviser's attention must be addressed.

### The three-part present in narrative and in improvisation

Paul Ricoeur (1984, 1985, 1988) investigates the concepts of time and narrative with reference to the contradictory character of reflection on time as proposed by Augustine. Ricoeur contends that the only possible response to the contradictions of time is *narrative activity*, or *emplotment*. He turns to the concept of *mimēsis* in Aristotle's

*Poetics*, focusing on the human activity of organising events through emplotment. Ricoeur's investigation is a complex strategy for approaching questions of personal identity. Narrative imagination can explore permanence and change, identity and difference. Narrative identity is an identity that changes (Kristensson Ugglå, 1994). Arguably, Ricoeur's time-oriented analysis of narrativity may prove quite helpful to understanding a multitude of aspects of practice and reflection in all of the time-based arts. In Augustine's analysis of time, Ricoeur sees an extended, three-part present, including the past present (memory), the on-going present (attention), and the present to come (expectation). Based on Augustine's analysis of the extension of the mind between expectation, memory, and attention, and in combination with Aristotle's concept of *mimēsis*, Ricoeur (1984: 52–87) develops a theory of a threefold mimesis: *prefiguration*, *configuration*, and *refiguration*. These perspectives could perhaps be translated as what one brings to the story, what one mediates in the story, and what one achieves through the story. Bjerstedt (2014) suggests that musical improvisation (like narrative) can also be understood through the concepts of prefiguration, configuration and refiguration.

The term 'storytelling' has a long history of prominence in descriptive and prescriptive talk about jazz improvisation, ranging from saxophonist Lester Young's legendary question to young players, "You're technically hip. *But what is your story?*" (cited in O'Meally, 1989: 221) to the very first sentence in pianist Randy Weston's autobiography: "I come to be a storyteller; I'm not a jazz musician, I'm really a storyteller through music" (Weston & Jenkins, 2010: 1). A recent interview-based study with Swedish jazz musicians (Bjerstedt, 2014) examines their views on the concept of 'storytelling' in connection with jazz improvisation. Most of them find it to be a very apt description of what jazz improvisation is about.

Ricoeur's analysis of narrative emerges as a suitable way to understand the storytelling of musical improvisation. Interpreting musicians' talk about improvisation, a distinction arguably ought to be made between three aspects of the improvisational moment: prefiguration (transformation of pre-existing materials), configuration (multidirectionality), and refiguration (conveying improvisationally created coherence).

The term prefiguration, then, can be used with reference to the ways in which jazz improvisers relate to and transform pre-existing musical material—how they are inscribed in musical traditions. Several informants in Bjerstedt (2014) comment on the well-known phenomenon of formulaic improvisation, where jazz solos to some extent consist of elements or formulae that are used repeatedly in different combinations. This phenomenon is related to concepts such as style and idiom. Furthermore, several informants comment on the deliberate inclusion of musical quotes: conscious, meaning-laden quotations from other musical contexts—a kind of musical self-reference.

When the informants point out qualities and abilities that are relevant to the jazz improviser, they include technical skills and theoretical insights as important requirements: among other things, technical command of one's instrument ('chops') as well as a developed theoretical knowledge of harmony and a sense of rhythm. All of these things, then, make up a sort of baggage that the improviser brings to the moment.

The term configuration will be used here with reference to improvisational multidirectionality in the present moment, including collective, interactional creativity. If the jazz improviser is to succeed in 'telling a story' (i.e. communicating a statement in a truthful and direct manner), then according to the informants, it is necessary to be open in mind, whole in body and comparatively unaffected by premeditated plans—to be present in the moment. Several informants in Bjerstedt (2014) emphasise that thinking and planning are a hindrance to playing—thinking is too slow. One jazz musician states the following: "As soon as I start to think about it, I can't play anymore" (Bjerstedt, 2014: 255). Listening to oneself emerges as crucial, but so does listening to others. In the interviews, the ability of presence is characterised as a mental readiness or awareness; in brief, as a sensibility that is directed not only inward, but also, and importantly, outward toward fellow musicians and the audience. The stories and reflections that the informants contribute provide a very rich picture of how the interactions between musicians may affect the jazz improviser: as a source of joy and inspiration; musical, intellectual and emotional challenge; energy and well-being. Judging from their statements, the musicians are clearly quite sensitive to whether such interplay functions well or not. Furthermore, in several statements by the informants, the audience is viewed as an important source of inspiration and energy for the jazz improviser; however, it can sometimes be a source of distraction and irritation. All of these aspects are relevant in the moment of musical improvisation.

The term refiguration ('the present of future things') may be used with reference to improvisers' acts of conveying improvisationally created coherence as a means of reaching listeners through the communication of meaning in ways that may be perceived as stories (e.g. regarding the structural framework of the musical material, the overall development of structure and intensity, or qualities such as simplicity versus complexity or continuity versus contrast and drama). These aspects emerge as examples of what the improviser may achieve through a moment of musical improvisation.

In sum, temporality and presence in the moment are crucial to our understanding of jazz improvisation. As demonstrated in Bjerstedt (2014) and in this article, the tripartite notions of Augustine's and Ricoeur's temporal analysis of narrativity have proven very useful to the task of analysing and reflecting on the interview data of the recent interview study (Bjerstedt, 2014). Arguably, it may be fruitful to expand this and apply a similar basis for threefold categorisation (past–present–future,

memory–attention–expectation, prefiguration–configuration–refiguration) to the interpretation and discussion of a multitude of aspects of practice and reflection in all of the time-based arts.

## Discussion: Relevance and implications for music education

In this section, we summarise the perspectives that have been presented with regard to their relevance and implications for music education.

### Practising, remembering and performing music

It is possible to challenge a student's thinking and musical performance with the help of Augustine's reflections on time. How are these different aspects of time intertwined when performing and when learning a piece? This question focuses on musical form, how we practise, how and what we remember, how we teach, etc. We practise something to remember it—in our heads, in our ears, in our body, and in our inner vision. At the same time, a musical performance is something we *do*. The memory is part of the future because it is part of what we plan to do. However, the main objective is that we do not practise to remember—we practise to be able to perform.

Learning and performing a piece of music puts focus on the whole as well as on the details. As Augustine points out, one note is also part of one phrase, which is part of one section, and so forth until we reach the end, which is the whole piece—or the whole life of humankind. All of these different levels are present when playing the one note in the now—in the present.

A student who begins playing a piece without having a clear idea about the tempo often interrupts himself or herself and has to start again. This error is mainly related to reading music and not playing by ear. If we play by ear, it is easier to have the whole piece, the memory of the piece as a possible future, in our minds before starting. If starting in the wrong tempo, the contradiction of memory and expectation becomes obvious, and we cannot continue. However, Sartre's (1943) observation that we have multiple pasts, presents and futures is useful when performing music. We practise not only in one way, not only in one tempo, not only in one venue, and these multiple possibilities give us freedom to perform. *This* can be taught at all different levels of music education by giving the student different possibilities to perform and by challenging the student.



### A multi-directed consciousness for an accordant now

Husserl presents music, or more precisely, the experience of music as an instrumental tool toward an understanding of time and consciousness. This leads paradoxically toward a possibility of a deepened understanding of music. One of the more interesting philosophical terms connected to this Husserlian investigation of time is, as presented above, an augmented understanding of intentionality and its possible directedness. Unfortunately, he does not investigate intentionality in depth on behalf of this diverse directedness. This shortcoming might be a result of his lack of a complex musical understanding. When Husserl presents music, he does so in an extremely elementary way: with single-sequenced tones in a familiar scale. In other passages of his writings, he elaborates, although in a quite sketchy fashion, on more complex forms of intentionality. Here, music is not the focus; instead, Husserl animates his thinking with feelings and especially love to understand a multitude of directedness—a parallelism of intentionalities (Husserl, 1913/2004: 321–323).

Intentionality should not be regarded as a single, established connection between one phenomenon and the psyche—rather, it should be seen as the potential for establishing intentionalities toward a multitude of phenomena. When we follow Husserl's thinking regarding intentionality, we are taught that intentionality has to be established between the subject and the phenomenon (e.g. between a student and a certain aspect of time in music). For intentionality to occur, we must be aware of the phenomenon in question—otherwise, it cannot reveal itself to us. Such awareness can be brought about by earlier experiences or phantasy. Different aspects of time in music need to be acknowledged as well as addressed regarding how they relate to each other and how they can occur simultaneously. For the music teacher, this could mean presenting the phenomenon of multidirectedness to the students as well as attempting to create awareness about how these different time phenomena exist simultaneously in music. In summary, whilst musicing (see Elliott, 2014), we must establish and direct a multiplicity of intentionalities to a range of phenomena in a present now.

### Musical meaning and the need to forget time

The concept of time in Bakhtin's notions of utterance and chronotope is constituted by the content and the emotional values characterising the respective time space rather than by an objective, measurable timeframe. Since an utterance may include any timespan, one may say that objective time is dismissed. Instead, it points to a subjective, timeless condition marked by concentration on a thematic content. This focus on content and meaning 'from within' the utterance and the chronotope, instead

of on their 'grammatical' structure, suits contemporary music education well. Today, most music educators agree that musical experiences have priority over 'musical grammar' or theoretical knowledge.

Bakhtin's chronotopes, such as those of adventure time and encounter time, may be transferred from literature to the field of music education. Thinking of the musical now—or even the music lesson—as a chronotope of meaningful time allows the mind to focus on the *quality* of this 'now', a quality that invites us to dwell in this time space. It could be understood as ontological time, where 'to be' is the essential action. It opens up a time space for artistic experiences that make one forget time and place. Listening to or participating in a piece of music that lasts for an hour may feel like a short moment, or like one is falling out of time, because one is being carried away by its powers. This condition may be compared to Heidegger's notions of *dwelling* and *releasement* (Fossum, 2015). Such a chronotope allows for momentous encounters with music, which does not necessarily mean that they only last for a moment—time is in a way dismissed, standing still, circular, or irrelevant. What is relevant is the emotional meaning that music arouses in people.

In the music classroom, the concept of the music lesson as ontological time could be understood as the establishment of a 'didactic contract' between the teacher and the students (Brousseau, 1997). For better or worse, a didactic contract will always exist in the classroom, regardless of whether one is aware of it or not. It consists of the implicit or explicit rules for the interaction in a classroom, often as a tacit agreement between teacher and students that determine the framework for what is at stake in the lessons. The teacher's engagement in the music and the activities used in the lesson, as well as his or her listening attitude toward the students, will be part of a didactic contract that affords ontological time. This would mean that the teacher is willing to dismiss time and a strict schedule with certain learning goals when necessary, and that he or she is willing to "walk together with the students along the border to the wordless and unavailable parts of our lives and our perception, giving room for the indispensable experiences of border and transgression that music affords, which remind us about the Socratic *scio, nescio*—I know that I do not know" (Ehrenforth, 2009b: 6, our translation). Of course, such a didactic contract depends on institutional and formal structures as well, such as scheduling or the need for assessment. However, the teacher is the most important factor in shaping an atmosphere where 'timeless' encounters with music can happen, even within a strict schedule, through performances as well as through listening activities.

In contrast to such an approach to music education in schools, school life today is increasingly dominated by what could be called 'effective learning time' in which making visible what you have learned within a limited timespan is what is important.



The desired learning outcome must even be described in detail in advance in order to be able to evaluate after the lesson whether the outcome has been achieved.

The outcomes of this investigation are thus questions rather than results: How does 'ontological time' fit together with today's dominating 'effective learning time' concepts? Which time spaces are there in schools for musical experiences that let students feel that 'life and art overlap', that touch them in ways we would not and could not describe in advance? Is 'dismissed time' possible in schools?

### Musical multidirectedness calls for a rich learning ecology

With reference to Ricoeur's perspective on narrative and time, we suggest that a musical improviser may be viewed as a traveller in time. The route the improviser will take is not—indeed, cannot be—known in detail beforehand. Hence, any plans one makes must be restricted to an overarching structure, such as coherence, simplicity, contrast, or dramaturgy. Furthermore, one must be prepared to adapt at any time, since the improviser must relate continuously not only inward, to his or her inner voice and vision, but outward as well, both to fellow musicians and to the audience.

The tradition, the style, the formulae and the quotes make up the luggage of the traveller; or rather, his or her supplies. In Husserlian terminology, this would be named earlier experiences that constitute what is known as the lifeworld (Zahavi, 2003). This notion may also be described as a landscape that corresponds to the main content of much education in jazz improvisation. To be able to focus simultaneously on many aspects, the subject must enrich his or her lifeworld with the necessary ability of multi-layered directedness of intentionalities in the width of presence.

Naturally, it may be easier to teach that which is easy to systematise. Arguably, however, these things make up only one of several important areas that any jazz improviser must focus on simultaneously. The interview results discussed above (Bjerstedt, 2014) point to the relevance and importance of more experiential, exploratory, collective and reflective approaches in jazz improvisation teaching and learning.

If the improviser is a traveller, then there may be more things to explore than the highroad, and there may be more things that he or she needs than luggage and a map. In other words, imitation and genre practices are not enough. Learning improvisation must include several other areas beside imitation, genre and form practices. In addition, other things emerge as essential: for instance, the improviser's multi-directed relations to fellow musicians and the audience as well as, and perhaps most importantly, the improviser's own inner voice and vision.

Although the other parts of the picture may be less prominent in formal jazz education, they appear to be no less important to the jazz improviser. Collective

interplay with fellow musicians as well as with an audience, of course, correspond to the observation that the improviser must continuously relate outward. *Maieutics* or *automaieutics* (see Bigelow, 1997; Ljungar-Chapelon, 2008) corresponds to the improviser's inner voice and inner vision, which are at the centre of his or her task. It is crucial that a jazz improviser develops this *multidirectedness*, an idea that corresponds to Husserl's parallel intentionalities. This is arguably an indication that phenomenological thinking may be suitable within the context of music. Importantly, the improviser's attention is always (i) directed, never contained, and (ii) directed in multi-varied ways, never in just one way.

This multi-variety of required skills is arguably the main reason why learning improvisation may have to rely on a rich learning ecology framework (Barron, 2006) that not only includes legitimate peripheral participation characterised by improvised practices and cognitive apprenticeship (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Nielsen & Kvale, 2000), but that also offers rich and multi-varied opportunities to steal knowledge (Brown & Duguid, 1993). Reflections like these may be developed into arguments against the more orthodox manifestations of formal jazz education in favour of more heterodox educational ideologies—or even autodidactic learning cultures.

### Music educational implications of reflections on time

Several important perspectives with regard to teaching and learning music have emerged through this philosophical survey. We suggest that reflecting upon time may challenge and develop students' ways of performing music and thinking about music in significant ways. As noted above, Augustine's reflections on time offer important perspectives on practising, remembering, and performing music. Husserl contributes with the directedness of the stream of consciousness, which can be described as a basis for tonality. He also outlines the idea of parallel intentionalities, which is useful when comprehending how it is possible to accommodate multiple times and attitudes in a present. Furthermore, the discussion of Bakhtin's concept of chronotope demonstrates that music's power to communicate and evoke emotional meaning is closely connected with the tendency in such experiences to *forget* time. While the emotional meaning is of the highest relevance, time is not. This need for experiencing and understanding music arguably poses a challenge for current music education with regard to its predominant ways of dealing with time (such as the notion of 'effective learning time'). Finally, with reference to Ricoeur's analysis of time and narrative, we suggest that the musician's (as exemplified by the jazz improviser's) need for multidirectedness in the musical present calls for a rich learning ecology framework, possibly including numerous different didactic loci.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, we wish to make a few remarks on form. This article has been categorised as “a polyphonic philosophical investigation”—an approach that may perhaps at first appear a bit exotic. What are the reasons for a philosophical approach to the musical present in the first place? Why should it be polyphonic?

Since philosophical problems seldom have one specific answer—if they indeed have an answer at all—a polyphonic approach to the concept of time may enrich students’ musical understanding and performance. Thus, the polyphonic approach in this article, based on the perspectives of four different scholars, may provide a fruitful starting point for a music educator, even if—needless to say—other perspectives remain to be explored.

If music students reflect on the concept of time and the importance of the present, they may attain an understanding of several phenomena that are crucial to musical practice:

- The function of each note in a musical piece;
- The relationship of the whole and the detail;
- How to accord a diversity of directedness;
- How music moves in time as well as the consequences of this movement in time (i.e. understanding music as a temporal performed art);
- The relationship between present time and musical experience.

In brief, the choice of investigative polyphony in this article is based on the assumption that musical understanding can be enhanced through the use of multiple philosophical approaches. Indeed, this insistence on multi-perspectival approaches can be taken one significant step further: we would argue that attempts at musical understanding and reflection on musical practice in general could benefit from polyphonic philosophical investigations.

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