

A Speaking Percussion Method Book: Practice, Pedagogy, and Performance

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Abstract

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School of Music

This dissertation is the first ever comprehensive method book for the practice and performance of solo speaking percussion music. Speaking percussion is an interconnected mode of performance that weaves together vocalization and percussive sound-making, each amplifying and extending one another. As a composite art form, speaking percussion interrelates seemingly disparate parts into a generative space for performance activity while expanding upon elements that are already present within a percussionist's practice: movement, gesture, expression, choreography, and body awareness. Speaking percussion offers a space to cultivate a practice of choice-making, introspection, storytelling, and self-expression. This performance space circulates and interconnects experiential knowledge,

emotion, place, culture, narrative, story, politics, and identity. Within the interpretation of speaking percussion scores, performers may be asked to center their identities, stories, and experiences, while considering those that belong to others. Alongside contextualizing articles from a fictional newspaper called *The Athena Daily*, the four chapters in this dissertation offer exercises centered on steady pulse and speaking, etudes, an introduction to the voice, exercises in vocalization, invitations to movement and body awareness, resources of support, and self-led activities. This work converses with fields of percussion studies, voice studies, theater studies, dis/ability studies, ethno/musicology, performance studies, American Indian and Indigenous studies, cultural and ethnic studies, music pedagogy, and first-person narrative-inquiry. Speaking percussion repertoire is situated within a historically Eurocentric discipline. This dissertation invites artists of all backgrounds and identities to this new curriculum, offering a warm, inclusive, and accessible space of learning that reaches toward dis/abled, femme, BIPOC, and LGBTQ+ communities.

Thank you trees, creatures, breeze, stones, waters, soil,
fungi, spiders, birds, and flowers for your resilience, beauty,
wisdom, and stories.

"But I believe my own voice continues to be found wherever I am
being present and responding from my heart, moment by moment.

My voice is born repeatedly in the fields of uncertainty."

- Terry Tempest Williams, *When Women Were Birds*

For Stuart Saunders Smith, whose music brought me here.



For Miles, who has accompanied so many.

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The Athena Daily

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The Athena Daily

Flying To You On This Day, In This Year



Welcome! I'm so glad you're here!

The Athena Daily is here to bring you into a conversation with Speaking Percussion music! In this periodical, you'll find articles with themes around identity, space & place, movement and body listening, independence & interdependence, and the artistic voice. This newspaper is named after Athena, a Great Horned Owl!



Using Your Voice, Practicing Choice

PERFORMER FINDS IDENTITY SEEDS PLANTED IN MUSICAL GARDEN

As percussionists, we are constantly offered opportunities to make choices. With any given performance setting, score, type of notation, instrumentation, and instrument setup, there are endless questions to be asked. Type of sound? What's available to me? setup organization? Implements? Personal approach to touch? Do I need to develop a new technique for this?... (cont'd on page 35)

WHERE DID THE

OWL land? On the evening of my thirty-third birthday, I visited and visualized one of my favorite places to go, k^Waatob, Carkeek Park in Lushootseed, meaning 'the place where people are ... (cont'd on page 123)



We Need Voice

LIKE AN ALBATROSS NEEDS WIND

Like An Otter NEEDS WATER → But

When preparing a piece of text set with percussion, it's helpful to ask 'what is the voice doing?' Considering texted or non-texted sounds as their own entity, externalized with the voice can provide a wider lense with which to see the voice, outside of our resonant bodies. Perhaps the voice is asked to express specific rhythms that pull away from the my natural speech pattern. What is the voice doi... (cont'd on page 16)

What is The Voice Doing?

A GAME OF SEEK & FIND: Independence & Interdependence

When I think of interdependence, I think of relationships: between individual humans and interconnected communities, between the webs of mycorrhizal fungi beneath the forest floor and the tree roots that weave through it. I think of listening within musical spaces where improvisation occurs between two or more musicians, how throughout that spontaneity of sound each note depends on how ... (cont'd on page 49)



LEARNING TO BE WELL

WITH WHAT'S AVAILABLE

As an artist, what does it mean to be well? How do we support ourselves as we move through our musical lives, balancing the inevitable entanglement of our personal needs and responsibilities, with the expectations of our work? How can we operate within spaces of artistic labor while.. (cont'd on page 61)



kassa overall and rose martin

reflections on independence and interdependence

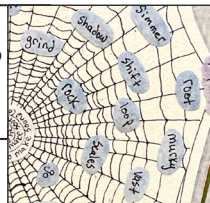
One evening, while grappling with the definitions and relationships within independence and interdependence, I emailed Kassa, asking, "can we have independence without interdependence? and vice versa? When is something interdependent, and when is it interrelated, or interconnected?" He replied, He replied, "It's a very interesting thought. For example, does the word independence actually suggest interdependence? things, I think it may! (cont'd on page 53)



YES, THIS OWL-INSPIRED NEWSPAPER EXISTS BUT ...

WHY Is This Book Here

AND WHAT MIGHT YOU FIND IN IT?



This is the first ever comprehensive method book for the practice and performance of solo speaking percussion music! Speaking percussion is an interconnected mode of performance that weaves together vocalization and percussive sound-making, each amplifying and extending one other ... (cont'd on page 11)



YES,
THIS OWL-INSPIRED
NEWSPAPER EXISTS
BUT ...

WHY **Is This Book Here** *AND WHAT MIGHT YOU FIND IN IT?*

This is the first ever comprehensive method book for the practice and performance of solo speaking percussion music! Speaking percussion is an interconnected mode of performance that weaves together vocalization and percussive sound-making, each amplifying and extending one another.¹ **As a composite art form, speaking percussion interrelates disparate parts into a generative space for performance activity,** while expanding upon elements that are already present within a percussionist's practice: movement, gesture, expression, choreography, and body awareness.² Speaking percussion offers a space to cultivate a practice of

choice-making, introspection, storytelling, and self-expression. **This performance space circulates and interconnects experiential knowledge, emotion, place, culture, narrative, story, politics, and identity.** Within the interpretation of speaking percussion scores, performers may be asked to center their identities, stories, and experiences, while considering those that belong to people outside themselves. This presents both challenge and opportunity.

The lineage of percussion referenced throughout this book is as a discipline situated within Eurocentric musical traditions. The repertoire is anchored

within Eurocentricity through its compositional, notational, performance, and epistemological practices. Historically, percussion repertoire, performers, and performance spaces have been oriented toward white, cis-gendered, 'able-bodied,' and heterosexual men.³ Of course, this history does not fully reflect the musicians, students, composers, experimenters, performers, listeners, sound artists, and teachers within our field. **Created with a welcoming warmth, this book invites practitioners of all backgrounds, ages, expertise, abilities, and identities into an inclusive, creative, and accessible space of learning.**

This book is a porous space for multiple epistemologies, acknowledging the myriad ways that individuals learn and how this learning is shaped through the different systems of

knowledge an individual might carry.⁴ Within *The Athena Daily*, the fictional newspaper embedded within this book, you'll find questions meant to guide a self-reflection of past and present ways of doing and being, both as individuals and as a part of the greater percussion community.⁵ These questions are situated within the Eurocentric musical-cultural histories that our community has been built upon. Let us imagine - with creativity, empathy, and playfulness - what we can learn, understand, interconnect, discuss, and create within the relationality of many bodies of knowledge. *The Athena Daily*, the aforementioned fictional newspaper, grew from an imaginative approach to sharing the instructional and contextual material for this book in an inviting and non-linear fashion. The last few spring seasons, a Great-Horned Owl named "Athena" has

been nesting in a raised planter at the entrance to the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center at the University of Texas Austin.⁶ The Cornell Lab of Ornithology installed a live cam in 2024.⁷ It was through this live feed that I met Athena, not long after she had laid a clutch of two eggs in early 2025.⁸ The rainy Seattle winter is a difficult and lengthy season, sometimes extending into May. Checking on Athena each day was a buoy. She bolstered my hope for the sunny, blooming spring to come; the new life that waited around the corner. Around that time I saw a visual art piece at a gallery installation showing the multi-media work of Seattle-based artist quinn mcnichol.⁹ quinn had created a large-scale, speculative-fiction newspaper called *the daily seequinns* during the COVID-19 pandemic, not long after the brutal murder of George Floyd by a Minneapolis police officer.¹⁰ *Vol. 9 of the daily seequinns* con-

tains articles of hope and a more just future.¹¹ Named after the owl whose existent brought me a hopeful light, *The Athena Daily*, led by personal-narrative inquiry, offers connections to the pedagogical material through perspectives of technique, artistry, choice-making, space and place, body awareness, musical and personal ecologies, labor, improvisation, accompaniment, and relational listening.

So who is this book for? Are you a curious first-timer who wants to include your voice within your percussive soundmaking? Are you hoping to grow a nuance within the layer (or, dare I say, limb?) of the voice to more saliently float, weave, and extend it within your percussive sounds? Are you deep within a journey of cultivating your personal speaking percussion techniques? **Wherever you land in the process of learning, you are invited to be here.**



Engage with this book however you like. Skip some things, revisit and repurpose others -- it's your journey!

The Steady Pulse Exercises in Chapter One offer methods to deepen your sense of embodied, personal pulse and expand your flexibility of limb independence and interdependence.

Figure 1.1 Left: *The Daily Seequinn's* vol. 9 ink, graphite, watercolor, collage on watercolor paper 30" x 40" 2020 by quinn mcnichol. Photograph by Sadaf Sadri.

Figure 1.2 Below: screenshot of Athena, sitting on a clutch of two eggs, March 18th, 2025.¹²



Sonic and somatic listening sits at the center. Here, the exercises increase in difficulty, ending with etudes of relative focus. Invitations into improvisation serve to strengthen your personal sonic vocabulary and your practice of self-accompaniment. This material reaches toward all vocalists, speakers, spoken word artists, and singers who want to deepen, interconnect, and externalize their sense of pulse with new sounds. **Chapter Two** extends those practices into exercises for speaking text. This material supports problem solving different relationships between voice and percussive sounds, such as: speaking in unison with or independently from the percussion instruments, the stage whisper, and re-working text you know well. You'll also find brief thoughts on the use of amplification in performance. **Chapter Three** centers the **physiology and mechanics of the voice**

itself. Informed by anatomy, the exercises interconnect body listening, warming-up, cooling-down, and generally getting to know your voice.

Chapter Four is titled "Invitations to Movement and Body Listening," and is a space to practice tuning into your body. This chapter is contextualized toward the percussionist's body, however these offerings are intended for all musicians and any human being to utilize! Finally, **the appendices** offer health resources, a "Representative list of Speaking Percussion Music," blank staff paper, and a working list of relevant digital resources and recordings.

May this book be a place of support wherever you are in your journey. I hope you enjoy spending time here.

We Need Voice
LIKE AN ALBATROSS NEEDS WIND

Like An Otter NEEDS WATER But



What
is
The
Voice
Doing?

When preparing a piece with text or song, it's helpful to ask 'what is the voice doing?' Externalizing the action of the voice in this way can provide a wider view with which to see the voice outside of our resonating bodies, as its own entity.

Perhaps the voice is rhythmized in a manner that differs from one's natural speech pattern. Or, what if the voice is in rhythmic unison with the percussion part, and becomes stiff or rigid? **What is the voice doing here?** How does it relate to the percussive objects? What if the voice is non-texted, acting as a sound maker? What is the voice doing when it swaps roles between the percussive sounds? Is it extending, am-

plifying, or contrasting the material? Is it telling a story? How do these different sonic terrains impact the independence and interdependence between one's voice and their percussion instruments? **Further, what choices could/need to be made?** Once the action of the voice is clarified, choice-making around vocal intonation, expression, and inflection, alongside the touch, tone, stroke, and phrasing of the percussion, can begin.

Check out *The Athena Daily* article titled "using your voice, practicing choice..." on page 29. There, I reflect on how meaningful choice-making through speaking percussion music has clarified my artistic identity.

CHAPTER ONE

Exercises For Cultivating a Steady Pulse

DIRECTORY

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STEADY PULSE EXERCISE NO. 1: Pulse Swap

YOU WILL NEED:

- | Any three instruments to strike: low, mid, high. |
- | Your comfortable vocal range. |
- | A metronome. |

- ### INTENTIONS:
- | A deeper sense of pulse. |
 - | Flexibility within variations. |
 - | Noticing your breath. |
 - | Improvisation with voice and percussion, together and apart. |

Find a **comfortable** position, so that you can **play, sing, and breathe** in a way that feels natural to you. Feel free to **choose percussive sounds** that **connect** to a piece of music or a sound world that you are **actively** working in.

Pitch is open for both percussion and voice. The **voice** may draw from **any pitch source** within or beyond the 12-tone scale, or from the chosen percussive sounds. Try to **interchange the roles** of the top system (continuing pulse) and the bottom system (high-mid-low sounds) **between voice and percussive sounds**.

Use a **metronome** as a means of **support**, checking in with your pulse, rather than as a source of reliance. For example, **set the tempo** to half the speed of your chosen pulse or consider using the metronome across one-third of your practice time.

BEFORE PLAYING, CONSIDER:

Which system, top or bottom, will be assigned to voice and to percussion?

What type of vocal shape will you use? (e.g. **do, da, dee, tah, ah, ha**)

What implements will you use for your percussive sounds?

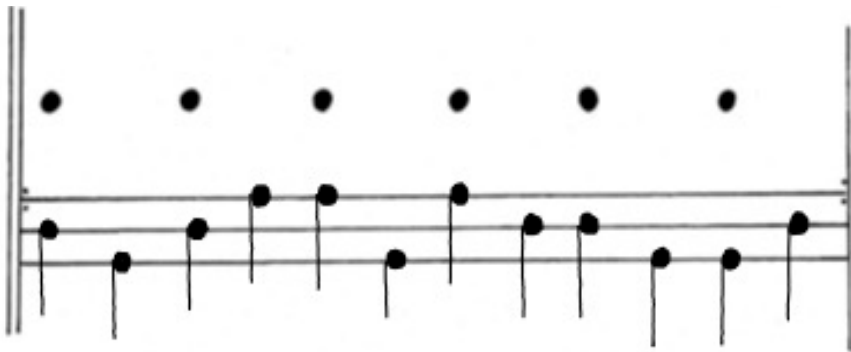
How many times will you repeat the exercise?

What tempo will be a helpful place to start?

How will you express duration and articulation for each line, top and bottom?

(round, full, short, spacious, connected, long).

1)



2)



3)



4)



5)



6)

Musical notation for exercise 6. It consists of a treble clef staff with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a common time signature. The melody is written on the staff with six notes, each marked with a dot above it. The notes are G4, A4, Bb4, C5, D5, and E5. The bass line consists of a sequence of eighth notes: G3, A3, Bb3, C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, Bb4, C5, D5, E5.

7)

Musical notation for exercise 7. It consists of a treble clef staff with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a common time signature. The melody is written on the staff with six notes, each marked with a dot above it. The notes are G4, A4, Bb4, C5, D5, and E5. The bass line consists of a sequence of eighth notes: G3, A3, Bb3, C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, Bb4, C5, D5, E5. There are two triplets in the bass line, each marked with a '3' below the notes.

8)

Musical notation for exercise 8. It consists of a treble clef staff with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a common time signature. The melody is written on the staff with six notes, each marked with a dot above it. The notes are G4, A4, Bb4, C5, D5, and E5. The bass line consists of a sequence of eighth notes: G3, A3, Bb3, C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, Bb4, C5, D5, E5. There are two triplets in the bass line, each marked with a '3' below the notes.

9)

Musical notation for exercise 9. It consists of a treble clef staff with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a common time signature. The melody is written on the staff with six notes, each marked with a dot above it. The notes are G4, A4, Bb4, C5, D5, and E5. The bass line consists of a sequence of eighth notes: G3, A3, Bb3, C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, Bb4, C5, D5, E5. There are two triplets in the bass line, each marked with a '3' below the notes.

TUNE IN

- To your breath.
- To your relationship with time.
- To your phrasing.

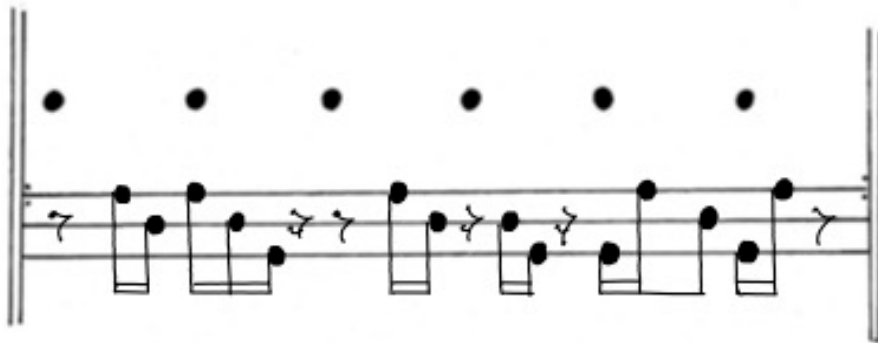
NOTICE YOUR MOVEMENT

- Where is tension located?
- Where is comfort and fluidity located?

SHIFT

- Take time to make adjustments for greater ease while you play.
- This includes shifting your tempo, modifying your pitch choices, or adjusting how you are set up.

10)



11)



12)

13)

AFTER PLAYING, CONSIDER:

How available is your pulse when you sound both parts?

Was there a vocal sound (do, dah, dee, ah, ha) that felt more or less ease-ful?

How did instrument choice and implement choice impact your playing?

Did you find a cyclic flow within the repetitions?

What tempo will be a good place to start next time you visit this page?

Were there articulations or phrasings that were supportive? Challenging?

If you tried this on a variety of instrument setups, how did those changes impact your playing?

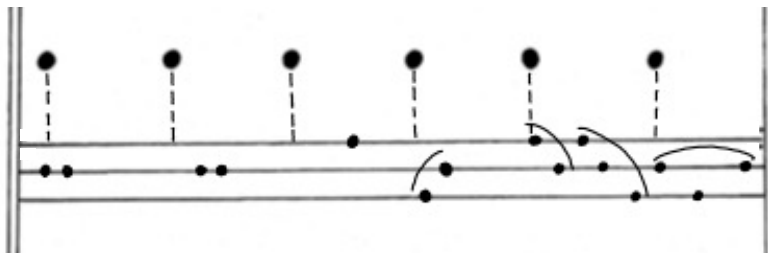
IMPROVISING WITH A STEADY PULSE

INTENTIONS

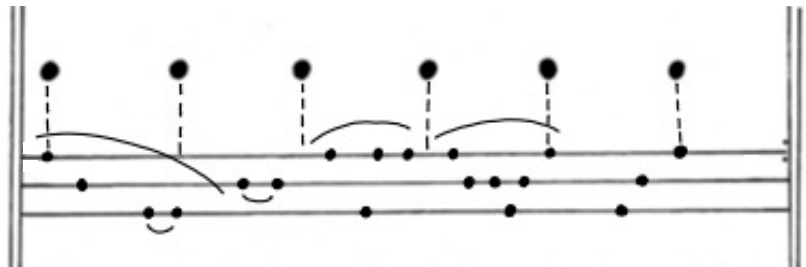
- | Explore the space around the pulse.
- | Try swapping roles between your voice and your hands.
- | Challenge yourself to create melody with the continuing pulse.

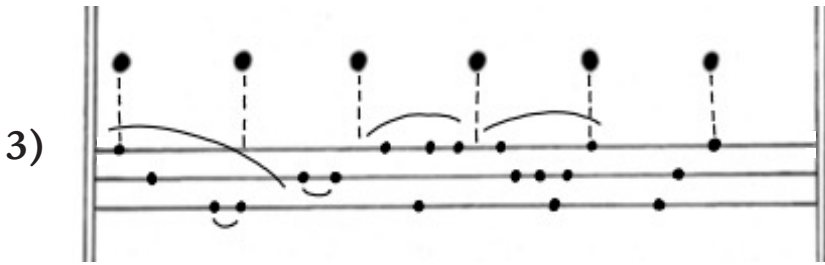
If improvising is a new practice, you may find the systems below helpful. The melodic ideas, notated below the pulse, are free from notated rhythm, floating around the continuing pulse. Try playing each system in a few different ways, varying with how the smaller noteheads move through space. After some time, move beyond the page! If you enjoy notating your ideas, you'll find a few blank, formatted systems on the next few pages and in appendix d.

1)



2)





Improvisation offers a space to seek sound and texture while developing new techniques. Here you can experiment with and practice expressing music-in-the-moment. A solo improvisatory practice can more clearly define and interconnect your personal sound, techniques, and inner pulse. As you play, you may hear ideas you want to come back to; revisit them! Through an iterative practice, you can trust the toolbox you built. **The more interdependence and independence you can develop, the more freedom you will have in your playing,** whether within a notated score or while making music spontaneously. Read more about interdependence and independence in the article from *The Athena Daily* titled, “A Game Of Seek and Find: Independence & Interdependence” on page 44.

BLANK STEADY PULSE STAFF PAPER





Etude No. 1

Measures 1-4 of Etude No. 1. The piece is in 3/4 time. The right hand features a melodic line with eighth notes and rests, including two triplet markings. The left hand plays a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The time signature changes to 4/4 at measure 3 and back to 3/4 at measure 4.

Measures 5-8 of Etude No. 1. The right hand continues with eighth-note patterns and rests, featuring two more triplet markings. The left hand maintains the eighth-note accompaniment. The time signature is 4/4 for measures 5 and 6, and returns to 3/4 for measures 7 and 8. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

Etude No. 2

Measures 1-2 of Etude No. 2. The piece is in 7/4 time. The right hand features a complex melodic line with eighth notes and rests, including a quintuplet marking. The left hand plays a steady eighth-note accompaniment with a quintuplet marking in measure 2.

Measures 3-4 of Etude No. 2. The right hand continues with eighth-note patterns and rests, including a quintuplet marking. The left hand maintains the eighth-note accompaniment with quintuplet markings in measure 4. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

Etude No. 3

First system of musical notation for Etude No. 3. It consists of two staves. The top staff has a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. The bottom staff has a bass clef and a 4/4 time signature. The music spans three measures. The first measure has a whole rest in the treble and a quarter note in the bass. The second measure has a dotted half note in the treble and a quarter note in the bass. The third measure has a quarter note in the treble and a quarter note in the bass. The system ends with a double bar line and a 6/4 time signature.

Second system of musical notation for Etude No. 3, starting with a measure rest labeled '4'. It consists of two staves. The top staff has a treble clef and a 6/4 time signature. The bottom staff has a bass clef and a 6/4 time signature. The music spans three measures. The first measure has a quarter note in the treble and a quarter note in the bass. The second measure has a quarter note in the treble and a quarter note in the bass. The third measure has a quarter note in the treble and a quarter note in the bass. The system ends with a double bar line and a 6/4 time signature.

Etude No. 4

First system of musical notation for Etude No. 4. It consists of two staves. The top staff has a treble clef and a 6/4 time signature. The bottom staff has a bass clef and a 6/4 time signature. The music spans three measures. The first measure has a quarter note in the treble and a quarter note in the bass. The second measure has a quarter note in the treble and a quarter note in the bass. The third measure has a quarter note in the treble and a quarter note in the bass. The system ends with a double bar line and a 6/4 time signature.

Second system of musical notation for Etude No. 4, starting with a measure rest labeled '3'. It consists of two staves. The top staff has a treble clef and a 6/4 time signature. The bottom staff has a bass clef and a 6/4 time signature. The music spans three measures. The first measure has a quarter note in the treble and a quarter note in the bass. The second measure has a quarter note in the treble and a quarter note in the bass. The third measure has a quarter note in the treble and a quarter note in the bass. The system ends with a double bar line and a 3/4 time signature.

Third system of musical notation for Etude No. 4, starting with a measure rest labeled '5'. It consists of two staves. The top staff has a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. The bottom staff has a bass clef and a 4/4 time signature. The music spans three measures. The first measure has a quarter note in the treble and a quarter note in the bass. The second measure has a quarter note in the treble and a quarter note in the bass. The third measure has a quarter note in the treble and a quarter note in the bass. The system ends with a double bar line and a 4/4 time signature.

Etude No. 5

Measures 1-4 of Etude No. 5. The piece is in 4/4 time. The right hand features a melodic line with eighth and quarter notes, while the left hand plays a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The key signature has one flat (B-flat).

Measures 5-8 of Etude No. 5. The right hand continues the melodic development with some rests and slurs. The left hand maintains the eighth-note accompaniment. The piece concludes with a repeat sign at the end of measure 8.

Etude No. 6

Measures 1-3 of Etude No. 6. The piece is in 4/4 time. The right hand plays a rhythmic eighth-note pattern, and the left hand plays a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The key signature has one flat (B-flat).

Measures 4-6 of Etude No. 6. The right hand features a melodic line with slurs and accents, while the left hand continues the eighth-note accompaniment.

Measures 7-9 of Etude No. 6. The right hand continues the melodic development with slurs and accents. The left hand maintains the eighth-note accompaniment. The piece concludes with a repeat sign at the end of measure 9.

Etude No. 7

Musical score for Etude No. 7, measures 1-7. The score is written for piano in 4/4 time. The first system (measures 1-4) features a complex rhythmic pattern in the right hand with a 7-measure rest and a 3-measure rest, while the left hand plays a steady quarter-note accompaniment. The second system (measures 5-6) continues the right-hand melody with a triplet and a 4-measure rest, and the left hand accompaniment. The third system (measures 7) concludes the piece with a final melodic phrase in the right hand and a steady accompaniment in the left hand.

Etude No. 8

Musical score for Etude No. 8, measures 1-6. The score is written for piano in 4/4 time. The first system (measures 1-5) features a right-hand melody with eighth-note patterns, a triplet, and a 5-measure rest, accompanied by a steady quarter-note bass line in the left hand. The second system (measures 6) concludes the piece with a final melodic phrase in the right hand and a steady accompaniment in the left hand.

STEADY PULSE EXERCISE NO. 2

Speaking Text

YOU WILL NEED:

- | An excerpt of unfamiliar text. |
- | Sticks/implements and a strikeable surface. |
- | A metronome. |

Note: while this exercise is interrelated with those in *Chapter Two: Exercises for Speaking Text*, the focus here is on the steady pulse.

INTENTIONS:

- | A deeper sense of pulse. |
- | Fluidity within improvisation. |
- | Noticing your breath. |
- | Improvisation with voice and percussion, together and apart. |
- | Greater ease. |

BEFORE PLAYING

Position yourself comfortably, so that you can play and read your text in a way that feels natural to you, and in a way that allows for full access to breathing.

Choose a tempo, such as 100 bpm, that you can comfortably play along with.

BEGIN

Choose a simple, repeating rhythm, perhaps ongoing eighth notes.

Play this with your metronome.

As you play, read your chosen text aloud, in your natural vocal pattern.

Read as if you are reading in a class, to a friend, or to a child.

Stay relaxed in the flow of repeating rhythms.

Stay with the pulse of the metronome.

For example, speak this:

"As with percussion, the use of the stethoscope is founded upon a simple philosophical principle; that of ascertaining whether the cells of the lungs are healthy, and fitted for the free reception of air in the function of respiration; or whether the membranes of the chest, or any vessels, valves, and cavities of the heart, are obstructed by any disordered action, or by any permanent disease."¹³

as you play this:



NOTICE:

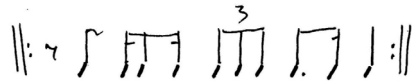
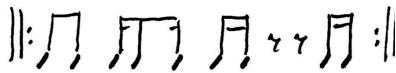
- | Your breath. |
- | Your way of phrasing sentences. |
- | Your use of space or pauses. |
- | Places of tension in your body. |

| Take time to make adjustments |
| for greater ease during this exercise. |
| This includes slowing your tempo or |
| rhythmic pattern. |

VARIATION A

Choose a new, short, and varied rhythmic phrase. This can be of your own creation or from another source, such as a method book or score excerpt.

For example:



Memorize the passage and play repeatedly while you continue to read.

Continue reading text that is brand new to you, rather than re-reading something familiar.

Variate with shorter or longer portions of text.

VARIATIONS TO CLARIFY THE SPEAKING VOICE

Practice speaking the text on its own, with your natural speaking prosody (intonation, rhythm, stress). Then, re-interconnect the speaking and percussion.

Practice playing the percussion solo for a while, re-centering your pulse. Then, re-interconnect the speaking and percussion.

Exaggerate sibilant consonances: s, z, sh, zh, x

Exaggerate consonant sounds such as: m, n, or l, especially at the end of words

Play with and shift the rhythmic predictability within individual syllables and larger phrases.

Try speaking from the perspective of a character, maybe one of your own creation.

Using Your Voice, Practicing Choice

In 2015, I began learning *...And Points North* (1989-90) by Stuart Saunders Smith (1948-2024), an experimental percussion theater piece.¹⁴ **The score prompts the solo performer to create an individualized rendition of the work, performing the story of a person searching for themselves and their spirit.** They look first in the city, then in the woods, and finally, above the treetops in the cry of the hawk. The score asks the performer to use their voice to deliver a narrative, to sing, and to recite a poem in both English and Passamaquoddy language.¹⁵ I was finishing a master's degree at the time and Ayano Kataoka, who had been working closely with Stuart, was my professor at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. I witnessed Ayano perform a stunning rendition of

PERFORMER FINDS IDENTITY

SEEDS PLANTED IN MUSICAL GARDEN

...And Points North at a faculty recital.¹⁶ As I helped with load out, she mentioned that I could consider that score for my forthcoming master's recital. After some consideration, I decided to include it as the second half of the show, and began gathering materials. **Choosing to play *...And Points North* was a definitive moment in my musical path.**¹⁷ Here, a density of choices shifted and expanded the depths of my artistry and personhood.

Ayano has performed *...And Points North* over fifty times, many of which were on tour with percussionist Sylvia Smith (Stuart's partner) as the Sylvia Smith Duo.¹⁸ Early in my process of learning the score, I recall Ayano sharing a memory of an early conversation with Stuart, “....Stuart said, 'no mat-

ter what, just make sure it's beautiful.'" What was more, Stuart had always been adamant that performers of this piece should not share audio or video recordings of their performances. He wanted ...*And Points North* to be wholly unique to each performer.¹⁹ **By limiting access to prior interpretations, the performer would have to lean on themselves in the choice-making process.**²⁰

I was on my own, facing the many types of choices needed to build the container for this music and to set the stage for the performance. The piece requires a uniquely crafted set of instruments and many of the materials needed had to be foraged, found, or handmade. I was green at this skill, and I was excited at the challenge and adventure of seeking materials and sounds that were just right for the piece and just right for me. **I felt empowered by the agency of get-**

ting to choose and create in this way. By the time I first performed ...*And Points North* in 2016 at UMass Amherst, on the stage of Bezanson Hall, the score had pushed me far beyond my comfort zone and deep into this world I had made inside Stuart's piece.²¹ **When I started the performance, I felt more at ease and confident than I had during any prior solo performance.** This was in part due to the months of choice-making, problem solving, and container creating. I was intimately connected to the space I had thoughtfully and intentionally built. I trusted the choices I had made within instrument considerations, physical movements, vocal intonations, new techniques, and touch. **This provided a sense of safety. I felt support and trust within myself, which led to an open-heartedness on stage.** Using my voice to speak and sing amplified the agency, clarity, and autonomy

that had been growing from the process. **More deeply, I was experiencing a sense of belonging. I felt, for the first time, that I had finally taken a step toward finding my artistic voice.**

Using my voice and practicing choice led me to the sweet gift of performance comfort. In solo performance, I had never felt that before. Looking back at my early solo performances, I witness myself searching for ways to access that comfort and ease. I continue to have a relationship with anxiety, especially on stage. I've overcome and healed so much by choosing to listen to what I can turn toward in my music-making that will allow for more ease in my body and more space for free expression. Planted in the soil of this blooming freedom and comfort, I found the sprouts of artistic identity. That performance of *...And Points North* revealed a new and now deeply rooted facet of

my creative life - my voice!²² **Learning ...*And Points North* also opened a window to the juicy, musical space that is speaking percussion music, where performance, choice-making, the artistic voice, the physical voice, the listener, and story are interconnected.**²³

For me, the choices made through the process of preparing a score are linked together, supporting the expression I am seeking. **If I take time, trust myself, and choose with intention, the choices stick. They speak with one another and are interconnected. No choice is more valuable than another.** A practice of intentionally making choices has built out a comfortable and confident creative space for my musical practice and performance. It is in this space of self-reliance that my artistic voice has begun to shine through.

CHAPTER TWO
Exercises For Speaking Text

DIRECTORY

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| Examples | 34 |
| Independent Rhythm | 35 |
| Examples | 37 |
| The Stage Whisper | 39 |
| Examples | 40 |
| For Text You Know Well | 41 |
| Amplification | 43 |

Exercises for Speaking Text: Simultaneous Rhythm

Some pieces and passages of speaking percussion music ask the performer to vocalize in a simultaneous rhythm, feel, or phrasing with what is indicated in the percussion sounds. How can the meaning and emotion of the text be clearly externalized without becoming stiff and overly rhythmic?

Similar to the upcoming exercises on page 41, I offer ways toward a self-guided process of vocal choices-making. These text-based exercises are inspired by Pala Garcia's *infinite practice* etudes.²⁴

Speak or Sing As If

you are sharing a personal story

you are speaking or singing to a friend

a child is listening

the words or sounds are slurred, each syllable connecting seamlessly to the next

every syllable is sharp, as short as possible

you are speaking or singing to an Elder

someone else is playing your percussion part

you are hearing it for the first time

Exercises for Speaking Text: Simultaneous Rhythm Examples

Figure 2.1 *To The Earth* (1985) by Frederick Rzewski, for speaking percussionist. Text: Homeric hymn. Instrumentation: four pitched clay flower-pots, played with knitting needles. Pitches: Db, F, G, B²⁵

Most of the material notated in 'To The Earth' by Frederick Rzewski is similar to the example above: indications of rhythmic unison between voice and flower pots. This piece offers a particularly challenging and highly specific example of being asked to speak in alignment with the percussion sounds, and without guidance on vocal tone, emotion or phrasing. It's very easy to be stiff or rigid, echoing the short, staccato resonances of clay pots played with knitting needles.

Figure 2.2 *Self-Accusation* (2014) by Kate Neal, for solo percussion. Text by Peter Handke. Instrumentation: bowl, 5 small steel pipes, 2 saw blades, 3 Indian bells, 2 shakers, guiro, box, sleigh bells, voice with various 'noise' directions.²⁶

In contrast, much of 'Self-Accusation' asks the performer to rigidly confine their voice within rhythmic notation. The voice extends the sonic quality of percussive sounds while negotiating appropriate tone and emotion.

Exercises for Speaking Text: Independent Rhythm

Some pieces and passages of speaking percussion music ask the performer to vocalize in a differing rhythm, feel, or phrasing from what is indicated in the percussion sounds. Others might instruct a conversational, storytelling vocal pace while the percussion sounds are in strict rhythm. The following reflects a personal process that has been supportive for my learning process. Each piece will need a slightly different approach.

Toolbox for Interdependence

- Choose a single measure or a short phrase.
- Give your first, best reading of the phrase as written, all parts simultaneously.
- Listen for the potentials of an end result and notice where things can be clarified.
- Try this a few times at verispeed.²⁷ Spend a lot of time playing slowly.

- Work through the vocal and percussion parts independently.
- Move slowly and patiently with each part, with the intention to embody these first impressions of each musical line.

- If the vocal line is spoken text, with non-specified rhythm, try this first with your most organic phrasing and prosody, that is, your conversational vocal rhythm and intonation.
- Try the text-based exercises on pages 33, 41, and 42 to experiment with speaking in different ways .

Exercises for Speaking Text: Independent Rhythm

(Toolbox for Interdependence, continued)

◦ If the material between both hands creates polyrhythms, perhaps try one hand, then the other. There is value in hearing the sub-independence of the interlocking rhythms.

◦ One beat at a time, knit the two voices back together. Begin to hear the multiple independent voices become an interconnected entity, idiomatic to this piece.

As you interconnect the parts, check in with a metronome at verispeed.²⁸

◦ If the polyrhythms are particularly challenging, you could input in the rhythms into a notation software as a supportive tool.

◦ Create a metronome 'track' of one of the rhythmic subdivision, with metronome apps such as PolyNome.²⁹

◦ Record the independent parts into a Digital Audio Workspace (DAW), layering them with varying alignments, listening to outcomes created with your own sound making.³⁰ This is a beneficial practice of 'hearing your own voice' literally and figuratively.

◦ Play the part for a friend, peer, or colleague, while they listen and watch the score.

Exercises for Speaking Text: Independent Rhythm Examples



Figure 2.3 *...And Points North* (1987-90) by Stuart Saunders Smith, for percussionist actor. Movement I. Instrumentation: singing voice, 5 tuned metal pipes, woodblock, finger cymbal, small pitched Tibetan prayer cymbal, small Peking opera gong, aluminum washtub.³¹

This excerpt from the first movement of '*...And Points North*' by Stuart Saunders Smith calls for a singing voice that floats above multi-percussion sounds, in polyrhythmic relationship with one another. Smith was thoughtful here, to generally align duple rhythms to the voice, acting as anchors above the quintuplet, sextuplet, and septuplet divisions in the multi-percussion sounds. When the vocal pulse is divided into five or seven sixteenths, it either matches in subdivision with the multi-percussion part, or the multi-percussion part shifts into duple, flipping roles. Downbeats either align between parts, or fill in for one another. Here, the performer needs a steady sense of pulse and an understanding of the relationship between the eighth note subdivision and quintuplets, sextuplets, or septuplets.

Exercises for Speaking Text: Independent Rhythm Examples

2

toast and I hear her laugh I feel my rock collection heavy as I take it

to show and tell I hear us reading pages from our favorite book to each other

Figure 2.4 *Familiar* (2019) by Alexis Lamb, for solo speaking percussionist. Instrumentation: page-turning sound, ringing items, 2 rocks of different pitches, a wood block-esque sound, 2 clinking sounds, aluminum foil, splash cymbal.³²

In the score notes for 'Familiar,' Alexis Lamb indicates the performer to speak this text with a conversational tone, that does not need to align with the rhythms in the multiple percussion part. The unique challenge here, considering the syllables in the text often align within the notated rhythmic figures, is avoiding an overly rhythmized way of phrasing the text, while maintaining a steady pulse throughout the varying rhythmic figures.

Exercises for Speaking Text: The Stage Whisper

A stage whisper differs from a day-to-day whisper. When, for example, whispering a secret into a friend's ear, the articulation of consonants is made with the exhalation of air. It is an articulation of breath.³³ Pushing this type of whisper to a louder dynamic can be harsh on the voice. A stage whisper is a resonant vocal tone with a lot of air and breath over the tone. The placement of your voice should be toward the front of your face, rather than the back of your throat.³⁴ Try the following process. It may help you figure out what kind of stage whisper feels best and fits your performance needs.

Try It Out

In your natural speaking voice, speak this text three times:

"If the character you play is an owl, you might want to try flying."

Speak the above text:

- Toward the back of the head; open the throat and lift the soft palate.
- Toward the front of your face; lower the soft palate, with a sense of lift in the throat.

[Read about the soft palate on page 79.]

**Alternate back and forth between back of the head
and front of the face, noticing changes in tone, timbre, and sensation.**

Speak the text toward the front of the face, adding a little bit of breath to the tone.

Continue speaking the text in this way, increasing or decreasing the breath.

The Stage Whisper: Examples

Is it vague on purpose?

Maybe change and death are synonymous.
Because she told me your old self is dead
So did they die? Or did they change?
Maybe nobody changes.
Used and abused
Yet unchanged
So why is it vague on purpose?
It didn't have to happen but it did.
It had to happen and it did.
It had to happen and it didn't have to.
It can appear and then disappear.
Forever take and never give.
You can be here and then.....

Figure 2.5(left): *Your Past Self Is Dead* (2023) by Melissa Wang for solo vocalist + 2 percussionists³⁵

This score calls for all italicized text to be spoken as a stage whisper, and underlined text to be sung. The pacing should increase in speed and intensity into the sung line 'so why is it vague on purpose?' and significantly decrease until the last line 'You can be here and then.....!'

Figure 2.6 (right): *Lyric* (2013/2017/2022) by Stuart Saunders Smith, for speaking voice and found object percussion instruments.³⁶

This excerpt demonstrates two types of whispers. First, 'soft whisperings,' without distinct text. This creates the effect of a distant, indecipherable, whispering voice. The subsequent text, 'this is never easy, this telling of lives,' is spoken in a stage whisper.

Exercises for Speaking Text: For Text You Know Well

These text-based exercises are inspired by
Pala Garcia's *infinite practice* etudes.¹³⁷

For Text You Know Well, Speak As If

someone just cued you

you are reading to a student

a child is listening

your words are urgent

a recording device is on, placed across the room

you are delivering good news

you are off stage

a loved one is listening

someone just surprised you

you are a bird

Exercises for Speaking Text: For Text You Know Well (*continued*)

For Text You Know Well, Try Speaking

with your face close to a wall

in a resonant space (stairwell, shower, parking garage, empty room)

into a microphone, amplifying your voice

in a small room

in a large room

to someone standing near you

to someone standing far away

very slowly, glacially slow³⁸

Amplification

Amplification, such as a lavalier (lapel) or headset microphone, may provide more ease and space for extended choice-making with your vocalizations. It can also present new, sometimes challenging elements to your performance planning and tech preparation.

A **lavalier microphone** is usually clipped onto an article of clothing worn by the speaker, positioned below the chin. A **headset, or 'headworn' microphone** is situated around the ear and across the cheek, with the microphone close to the mouth (i.e. a 'Britney Spears' microphone). The closeness of the microphone amplifies nuances in the vocalizations with less vocal effort or 'pushing.' In my experience, this type of microphone is very present, picking up the sound of air from an inhale and exhale, or a swallow sound during a drink of water. You'll find you can easily create a windy, friction-y sound from the exhalation of air into microphone, with a headset microphone or a standalone microphone.³⁹ The contact of air to microphone occurs less with a lavalier microphone, since it is positioned away from the airway.

A GAME OF **SEEK & FIND:**

Independence & Interdependence

When I think of interdependence, I think of relationships: between individual humans and interconnected communities, between the webs of mycorrhizal fungi beneath the forest floor and the tree roots that weave through it. I think of listening within musical spaces where improvisation occurs between two or more musicians, how throughout that spontaneity of sound each note depends on how the individual listens to what came before and how they anticipate what is to come. **I think of how musicians accompany one another, in any musical space, until the music comes to a close (or a pause, or a breath).** Each individual chooses how they sound their listening relationships of accompaniment within the ensemble.

In George Lipsitz and Barbara Tomlinson's book *Insubordinate Spaces* (2019), the authors speak of improvisation and accompaniment across musical and social spaces, as a way to "fuel the creation of new social relations and new social realities."⁴⁰ **Improvisation or spontaneity (responding in real time) occurs as each of us walks along our paths, both in our day-to-day routes and in the larger walk of one's lifespan.** Here we accompany one another in our various ways and amounts of time: brief, long-term, or indeterminate. Spaces of improvisation and accompaniment compel each individual to listen and respond in relation to the other. **This kind of relational listening builds on**

a term offered by sound artist Lawrence English who centers the relationships between sound, place, and listening to more clearly locate listening within his practice of field recording.⁴¹ In his 2017 paper “Relational Listening, A Politics of Perception,” English states, “by examining listening and its relation to field recording, it is possible to recognize the auditory act as the point at which the creativity of the art form emerges. Thus, I argue that listening, as an agentic and effective undertaking, is the point at which creativity emerges in the practice of field recording.”⁴² In collaborative performance-research, musician and educator John-Carlos Perea and I build on Lipsitz, Tomlinson, and English’s work, asking: what happens when you place relational listening in the center of the room? How can relational listening become the point of emergent creativity? What can

this look like in spaces of education?⁴³

In my one-on-one teaching, I have begun practicing a more intentional way of listening with students, noticing the subtle, nuanced moments where creativity and new connections emerge. We improvise and accompany one another, and I check in with myself: what is the center of this moment? How can I relate a small moment of musical growth to the bigger picture of the student’s life? How do these moments connect and reflect throughout my life? What happens if relational listening is placed at the center, and is continually re-centered? Whether within one-on-one group settings with young students, in sharing graduate seminar space with both peers and teachers, or in musical collaboration, relational listening offers a potential for new pathways and new social relations. In this frame-

work we may be able to more clearly see the relationships between our independence and our interdependence.

Limb independence, a term I am most familiar with in drum set-specific contexts, can be positioned nicely within the context of a speaking percussion practice and performance. Anatomically, the upper and lower limbs are the mobile and free arms and legs of the human body. Musically, 'limb independence' extends this understanding of one's mobile and free entities into an active state of independent and interdependent sonic expression. **The voice, a mobile and free entity that exists in an active state of sonic expression, can be invited into this musical definition of limb independence.**

Lately, I've been returning to the drum set, a place where I began as a very

young musician. In the fall of 2024, I shared in sound and conversation with drummer, improviser, and educator Ted Poor at the University of Washington. Here I found space to revisit my understanding of limb independence with the re-inclusion of feet. This had me asking a different set of questions, both technical and artistic, interconnecting my improvisational and songwriting practice and expanding my understanding of interdependence. **I found that spending time with an instrument that I don't actively perform on created a neutral space to listen with a beginner's mind, allowing a fresh relationship with the drum set to bloom.**⁴⁴

The drum set has been a site of improvisation, a practice that has clarified my artistic voice and supported a continued interconnection of my identities as performer, composer, collaborator, caregiver, teacher, peer, friend, colleague,

and more. **When I improvise, I feel a simultaneous expression of newness within history, hearing myself grow while challenging my habits and patterns.** I'm engaging with the skills I have built through the physicalities of percussion performance, the years of embodied choreographies and learned interdependent movement-patterns. The more time I spend in new sonic places, experimenting with patterns, ideas, and variations, the greater my well of sonic vocabulary grows, expanding my freedom of expression.

At the time of writing this article, I have the opportunity to play music and share in conversation with drummer, educator, rapper, and producer, Kassa Overall. One evening, while grappling with the definitions and relationships within independence and interdependence, I emailed Kassa, asking, "can we have independence without interdependence?

and vice versa? When is something interdependent, and when is it interrelated, or interconnected?" He replied, "It's a very interesting thought. **For example, does the word independence actually suggest interdependence?**

I think it does. If it references two or more things, I think it may! At minimum, it seems to suggest a relation to each other." We spoke about our personal processes of incorporating voice into our percussion playing and began to name the times in that process that independence and interdependence "might, could, maybe" play a role. Our conversation generated new connections for both of us and revealed many new questions. We both agreed to talk more, this time with a recording device. We recall our previous thoughts about the relationship between independence and interdependence and discuss their use as a tool, the connection of body memory, and the role of pulse.

kassa overall and **rose martin**
reflections on
independence *and* **interdependence**

Kassa: ...I do remember some bits where it was like, **we were talking about independence and - does it exist truly? Or does the word independence point at dependency? Like, for things to be independent, it also notes that they are actually connected.** And I thought that was actually, that felt interesting. Things could be independent, but they're related still. Okay. So that's cool. And then interdependence, is it true that things are truly interdependent? And it was like, maybe not. Because [...] does the right hand need to be playing this, but the left hand be playing that? And they also can be, you know, [...] one limb can be an anchor for another part. So, interdependence is there. So those are [...] a few bits that I remember.

Rose: Yeah. Thank you. That's helpful. I remember also [...] the questions I'm thinking about are like, [...] what's the difference between them? Or how, how do they relate in the process of doing like, multi-limb things? **And I remember you were talking about sort of like, okay, if you're working on playing drums with your hands and feet and then doing some vocal work at the same time and how it's like, you kind of maybe [...] work on them independently and then slowly bring them together and then they might, could, maybe, become somewhat dependent on each other.** Like it's like a new organism.

Kassa: - it becomes a new singular thing.

Rose: Yeah. And that like, it could even be that it could be hard to tease those
back apart.

Kassa: Right.

Rose: A little bit.

Kassa: I like that idea.

Rose: I just thought that was so interesting.

Kassa: I like that. It “might, could, maybe.”

First off.

(laughter)

Rose: I'm not going to say “for sure.”

Kassa: I think that's like [...] that should be a new singular.

(laughter)

Rose: Yeah. There should be a word.

Kassa: Might, could, maybe. Might-could-maybe is like a
singular.

(lots of continuous laughter together)

Kassa: mightcouldmaybe. It might - could - maybe!

Rose: . . .possibly . . .!

Kassa: You could put the commas in different places.

Rose: Yeah!

Kassa: Yeah. The “might, could, maybe.” So yeah, I think that's really deep, where the whole idea is you have these things that start out difficult to do together and then you work on them individually. Then you work on doing them together. Then they become one thing where it's almost like, damn, I don't, it might be hard to do this by itself because I'm so used to them being one thing. Even like, [when] we were talking about the lyrics.

[Kassa had spoken earlier about recalling a line starting from the middle of a longer lyric]

Kassa: If I sing that song, if I sing the verse from the beginning, I could tell you the lyric correctly because it [...] leads to it. But I couldn't remember it just by itself. So even [...] that in and of itself, it's dependent on the totality.

[...] And so let me ask you a question with all this. The idea of thinking about it as independent, dependent, interdependent, or singular [...] there is no longer an idea of whether it's independent or dependent because it's [become] one thing. Where does that lead you in a use-case space? Meaning like, where can we take that in terms of usefulness or in terms of approach, whether that's writing, performing, or teaching? **How can you use that as a tool?**

— — — — —
How Can You Use This As A Tool?
— — — — —

Rose: Yeah. Oh, that's a great question. I love that. I mean [...] that kind of came up maybe in [the] teaching conversational space earlier when you were talking about [...] **how we think of the different voices of the drum set in a spontaneous musical moment. And that it's [an] organism, [...] the**

sum of all its parts. [...] I like to think about the relational aspect of interdependence, independence, in a zoomed out [...] social, relational way too. [...] I've been really interested in the last few years about fungi, and how they are like, you know, this web [...] underneath the forest floor, and the trees and the fungi are [...] interdependent on each other, and they coexist and, you know, support each other and can nourish each other. So I'm excited about like, those kinds of implications of thinking about things in that way. Like, as people, how we can be interdependent with each other in our smaller communities and then zooming out to bigger communities? Teaching wise, for me personally, I like to [operate] in a more collaborative way with my students. **And I always learn so much with them, and from them. And that feels very interdependent, like, I'm**

not going to be able to be a supportive teacher that helps them nurture what they already have in their unique ways, if I think that we're independent of each other, or that there's some kind of like... power dynamic.

Kassa: Right, right, right. Or “you know it all” and they “don't know it.”

Rose: It's like, no one knows everything.

Kassa: No one knows anything, really. Yeah, I feel that a lot. And I feel like, I've noticed that too with my experience teaching here. It's like [...] I'm able to be a student again. Because questions are being asked. Some questions that I asked in the past, then questions I've never asked before. So I get to like, go back through it, you know, the rebirth thing, you know. Even with having a son, it's like, that's also an amazing, similar experience.

Yo, he stood up today for the first time!

Rose: Really? Yeah. Oh my gosh, that's so exciting.

The Body And Its Memory

Rose: Some connection there [...] when you were talking about your little kiddo standing up, and you mentioned something about [...] how a baby's not going to remember [that first time they stood up]. But it's like, our *bodies* [will] remember.

Kassa: yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah

Rose: And then thinking about interdependence and...

Kassa: Yeah. Well, I don't know. I feel like muscle memory is kind of [...] similar to, like, the singular [independent] feeling of a thing. You know? [...] you

could develop the muscle memory of [...] that one line. You know what I mean? **You could develop that and get it to where it's like, you don't have to start from the beginning to play measure five or whatever, 'A2.'** You know, you could break them down, and that's all. I was going to say, we were talking about, like, the whole [...] use case idea. [...] And I was thinking that one thing that I'm actually going to use from this conversation and something that I've messed with in the past is ... the idea of using both as your toolkit. **You know [...] okay, first, obviously, you do one part, another part, and another part. And you work them out until you can do them together. But then once you can do them together and it becomes tough to do one part [...] go back to doing the [other] part. You know what I mean? [...] basically [...] to develop the muscle of being**

able to think like it's a singular organism and then to shift, and to see them separated.

[...] Kind of like at-will to do both. And, like, one way that I practice something that's [...] almost related to that, is if I have a pattern that I'm working on, I'll practice it to the metronome. But the metronome will be at, like [...] 32nd notes. And I'll practice the pattern like that. And then I'll put the metronome to, like, whole notes. [...] what happens is you, like, you start to feel the difference between this super quantized grid approach and then this super loose approach. And I think what happens after a while, after doing both for a period of time, you almost can, like, get away from that duality of those two things and really start to feel it both. Yeah, it's, like, loose but precise or, like, precise but relaxed and that kind

of thing. And just being able to approach a thing from two different perspectives gives you a lot of possibility ... a more kind of creative or metaphorical, poetic ...

Rose: Sort of like right brain, left brain kind of thing?

Kassa: Yeah, that kind of thing. And when I'm learning... You know, I guess my relationship to drums [...] I do a lot of improvising or spontaneous composition or playing in the moment and all of that. But my practice [...] I think my practice to get to that is the opposite. And that's why I have all these books and metronomes and all these little hacks to get more skill set in my toolbox. But the goal of that is only to like, free up the opposite. You know, it's to free up the openness. [...] When I'm learning something, there's just kind of like two ways of ap-

proaching it. You know, there's this ... analytical way and then there's turning that off and being able to approach it without the analytical way. And sometimes when I'm working with a student, I'll tell them, like, "Alright, now just try to will it and, like, do it." You know? Or, like, we'll learn the pattern at a [slow] tempo. And they just tried to do it faster. And they couldn't. And so we slowed it down. [...] let your will just make it happen! You know, imagine you're on stage and you just got to do it, right now, at this tempo. And I see it happen like, all the time where they're like, "ah, [here] it comes!" And they're so happy because they're like, "yo, I have this power!" you know. **But it's like, it doesn't come from the analytical space. You know, it comes from that other space, that intuitive, you know, and just like ... let it go. Just let go and just shoot the shot to see if it goes in.** I just love see-

ing it happen. And I know it to be true because of how many times I find myself in that position where I'm on it. I'm performing or whatever. And even maybe me, I might have started the song way faster than I meant to. And now here we are. And here comes that part. And you're like, and you're just like, "whoa, it's working. I can't believe I couldn't do this at the sound check," you know, it's like it's coming out. Everybody's staring at me and they think I'm going to play it, you know. So just do it. Then [with the student] I'll put [the metronome] even faster. I said, "just don't think about it. Just see ... can you just do it?"

Rose: I feel like there's a level of trust there too.

Kassa: Yeah. With yourself. Yeah. [...] You can develop that muscle of the intuitive and trusting. And I think that [...] it's

almost like when you're studying, when you're doing anything academic, I think like, there's a little bit that's like, [...] unstated. It's almost like you can't really teach somebody. **There's this little bit that's like the unspoken part where it's like, okay, we do all this academic, mathematical, cerebral stuff. But there's this other little bit of like, mystery and intuition that we have to remember. It's almost like the container for all of this stuff is actually mystery. You know what I mean?**

Rose: That's cool....

Kassa: Yeah.

[_ _ _ _]
What about pulse?
[_ _ _ _]

Rose: I'm curious about what the role of [...] pulse or [a] steady beat plays in all the things that we're talking about.

Whether it's change, or dependence, or independent or interdependent.

Kassa: Yeah. I think that, I think that pulse is like, it's kind of like a very important tool in a toolbox. And depending on our level of ability to notice it [...] pulse is probably in everything. I mean, I think pulse is pretty much in everything. Even if you're trying to be absolutely free in like, this is a no-pulse-zone type of a performance. It's, it's still kind of there. It's still kind of like one of those things that you can't fully escape. But I'm going to [...] diverge from that for a second. And say that I'm going to talk about it as a tool [...] in an on-purpose kind of way. But it can be extremely valuable in every aspect of life. [...] some people say "time doesn't exist," you know. And I agree with that in the sense that like, it's a useless thing to live by in terms of your life. [...] thinking about time in that way of

like, controlling you. But it's a useful thing to control for your own use. You know, like how we'll use a timer to have these like compositional containers of three minutes, you know, but that's also a pulse. [...] and you can flow with the pulse and you can push against it and create tension.⁴⁵ [...] But I think it's like a very useful tool. [...] We all have our like, heartbeat, you know, and so, think as humans, we understand the idea of pulse in our nature so much [...] heartbeats, and when we walk, and all these things have this [...]cyclical, repeated kind of thing. [...] **I just think that it's like a very foundational thing [...] I'm working on the level of like, trying to be able to play the drums with a civic duty, you know what I mean? Pulse is extremely important.**

Rose: How one pulse can influence another pulse.

Kassa: Yeah.

Rose: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Kassa: So that's like a thought, that's just like a thought storm,
related to pulse.

Rose: Thought salad.⁴⁶

Kassa: Yeah, yeah, more so. That's awesome.

Rose: I love a good thought salad.

Kassa: Good thought salad.

LEARNING TO BE WELL WITH WHAT'S AVAILABLE

*Your body is a site of liberation.
It does not belong to capitalism.
Love your body.
Rest your body.
Move your body.
Hold your body.*

- Tricia Hersey⁶⁴

As an artist, what does it mean to be well? How do we support ourselves as we move through our musical lives, balancing the inevitable entanglement of our personal needs and responsibilities, with the expectations of our work? How can we operate within spaces of artistic labor while we exist in our ever-fluctuating human bodies? How might we more healthily perceive the care we need to give to ourselves? Or, more generally, how can we more healthily perceive ourselves while our performing bodies are viewed as market commodities? How can we more easily locate and access support for our phys-

iological systems?⁴⁷ Thinking of both mind and body, physiological here refers to the many, interconnected parts of our living bodies. How can we more deeply listen and converse with our physiological and spiritual fluctuations, as they impact one another? How can we deepen our wells of self-patience when our physiological and spiritual thresholds fluctuate in capacity? Further, how can we limit over-stretching ourselves in our efforts to locate and access the care and resources we need? It's crucial that these questions are named and acknowledged despite the uncertainty of singular, permanent, or definitive answers. Here,

through the modality of narrative-inquiry and story, I share parts of my journey deciphering these questions. I observe how they have informed my understanding of community support, artist labor, health and well being, and the relationships of independence and interdependence. **To the reader: I offer these questions as a space of reflection. How do they relate to your unique stories and the stories within your communities?**

In December 2022, I experienced an acute nervous system and neurological health crisis that left me immobilized for a number of weeks, and which I continue to heal from and seek resolve. **This health event radically changed my day-to-day threshold of activity, external input, and energy output.** With a sudden onset of symptoms closely related to those of a concussion, I became hyper-sensitive to sensory input, most

prominent being light, sound, and conversation. The resulting symptoms of overstimulation manifested in myriad and hard to describe symptoms. The two clearest symptoms I can speak about are chronic fatigue and what I now understand to be nerve pain (neuralgia). I have yet to receive a formal diagnosis and have been mis-diagnosed a handful of times. Since December 2022, I have sought treatment from many modalities and perspectives, first with Western medicine: primary care physicians, neurologists, ophthalmologists, and optometrists. For the most part, this led me to dead ends, non-answers, and a lack of acknowledgement and understanding of my symptoms. I learned that the legitimacy of one's chronic illness, specifically one that presents hidden symptoms, may be swept under the rug by the system grounded in the oft-quoted principle "First, do no harm."⁴⁸ My symptom

of chronic, deep fatigue, for example, continues to be dismissed in medical doctor's offices. When I receive doubt in response to self-advocacy, I usually am too depleted to externalize my anger or further advocate in a supportive or productive manner. I am grateful to be in a place where I can write this article. As I approach three years of slow and steady recovery, I have enough distance to be the subject. In his chapter, *There Are Never Enough Spoons*, sound studies and disability studies author Jonathan Sterne discusses fatigue through his lens of chronic thyroid cancer treatment. He frames this experience well:

You will not likely encounter me when I am in the throes of fatigue; and perhaps more to the point, I am less likely to encounter me when I am in the throes of it. Even my recollection of fatigue is hazy...I cannot be a fatigued subject when I am lively enough to write or think about it. And when I am a fatigued subject, I cannot outline my subjectivity for you.⁶⁵

With trial and error, I found a more sup-

portive path of healing, strength, and resilience through somatic-led therapy, integrative somatic body work (Soma), acupuncture, naturopathy, movement, rest, and holistic psychiatry.⁴⁹ Thankfully, my health is now in a much more balanced and manageable place.

Through the lens of this sudden physiological change, my learned assumptions, expectations, and internalizations of ability, disability, and ableism were challenged on a deep level. **In a practice of care, I have come to appreciate the word availability.** With availability, I can reframe my inner dialogue and adjust my lens toward supportive thoughts, shifting into a mindset of need over ability. Thoughts such as, “___ is what is available to me at this moment” and “what do I need to support myself?” contrast an automatic thinking of, “I can't do ___” or “I am not able to do ___ anymore.”

This has helped create a healthier mindset around symptom prevention: saying no to certain activities so I will feel well later is not taking something away, but **I am giving a gift of more availability to my future self.** Still, I make my best attempt at limiting the self-supervision toward how I talk to myself, remembering that change within learned perspectives, self-talk, and the perception of self is gradual. Availability offers a gentle re-frame that has led me closer to a healthy acceptance and understanding of living with chronic illness, one that continues to reveal an everchanging and more distinct means of availability.

I wish I had understood the power of thinking with availability earlier on in my adult life. In January of 2016, soon after completing my Master of Music degree at UMass Amherst, **I developed a severe tendon-overuse injury.** Within

the spaces of my musical practice and my various jobs in hospitality and caregiving, I was under-informed about how to move and carry my body to meet the demands within these differing spaces. **I had carried unreleased tension and pushed through discomfort for too long.** Throughout most of 2016 - 2018, I took hiatus from an active percussion-playing practice as I searched for physical ease and medical resolve with this injury. This healing period coincided with a budding mentorship with composer Stuart Saunders Smith. I took steps onto a new path of composition, deeper listening, and silence of many types. Even when holding a pencil or playing a piano was unavailable to me, due to the severe pain in my hands, I was engaging with a creative practice that supported the deeper healing of post-graduate school burnout. I sought out various healing modalities, such as physical and

occupational therapy, acupuncture, and massage. These practices, while temporarily relieving some of my pain, did not offer sufficient physiological guidance or support. I didn't have a diagnosis. I felt lost and discouraged. I knew there was a deeper root to heal. As I struggled to manage my symptoms, I learned about Rolwing© Structural Integration. This somatic, neuromuscular body work practice was developed by Dr. Ida Rolf in the 1940's. Dr. Ida (1896-1979) was a biochemist and body worker of many modalities who, in 1920, earned her Ph.D. in biochemistry from the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Columbia University.⁵⁰ Rolwing centers the fascia, our bodies' "elastic, stable, and moldable" connective web of soft tissue.⁵¹ **Fascia remembers our movements and holds the spectrum of emotional and physical experiences, traumas, and injuries carried through our lifetimes.**⁵² It is

the living memory of every moment that shapes our being. As an integrative and interconnected body/mind practice, this work touches the emotional, behavioral, and spiritual elements of our existence. Over roughly twelve months of one-on-one treatments with Advanced Rolfer Richard Shaw, I felt a measured expansion of ease in places that had been loud with pain for years.⁵³ My body slowly re-organized itself, relieving a substantial portion of my current pain and resolving spinal alignment and compression histories my body had carried from both childhood and adolescent years of classical ballet and high school marching band. This Rolwing support happened to dovetail with an active and acute period of loss and grief, and provided me with tools of deeper resilience and trust with my body. When I began a return to my percussion-playing practice in 2018, **I resolved to make inten-**

tional choices when it came to my creative life, how I held myself in practice and performance, and how I prepared for and recovered from these situations. In a sense, this experience began my journey of self-perception through a lens of availability. I took steps onto a new path of continued learning and re-learning, both in how I listen to my body while playing percussion and how I carry myself within all spaces and places of my life.

At the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, in September of 2014, I enrolled in a musician-centered body listening class that applied the Feldenkrais Method by Moshé Feldenkrais (1904-1984) to a musician's practice. This neuromuscular somatic movement practice uses "gentle movement and directed attention" to support healing through the creation of new neural pathways.⁵⁴ In the 1940s, Feldenkrais began a non-invasive, self-re-

habilitation journey of healing a decades long chronic knee injury, interconnecting and employing his vast knowledge of physics, neurology, psychology, learning theory, and body mechanics.⁵⁵

"The mind gradually develops and begins to program the functioning of the brain. My way of looking at the mind and body involves a subtle method of 'rewiring' the structure of the whole human being to be functionally well integrated, which means being able to do what the individual wants. Each individual has the choice to wire [themselves] in a special way."⁶⁶

Our group classes were held in the primary large ensemble rehearsal space, where we would gather with our blankets and pillows on the floor, setting ourselves up in a row. **Our instructor, Stephen Paparo, relayed verbal instructions to guide the slowest of slow movements, interjected by short periods of rest.** In Paparo's work, Somatic Self Care for Music Educators, he describes the somatic education of the Feldenkrais Method as "a pedagogical framework for

learning to observe oneself in action, while developing sensory acuity in order to clarify and improve function and performance.”⁵⁶ **In class, Paparo’s movement instructions were framed within a deep listening toward our bodies, what we needed moment by moment, prioritizing and respecting what was available to each of us.** Not only was this class a gift for any tired graduate students’ body (falling asleep in class was a welcome occurrence), its specificity to the practicing musician offered a space for somatic listening within the context of one’s musical practice. This experience of direct musical-somatic intention was a new and pivotal space for me. In a memorable portion of the course, we each brought in our instruments, taking turns over a number of weeks to play for one another before and after Stephen’s verbally-guided movement instructions. Stephen would cater the movement ma-

terial to each performers’ needs, offering time for collective reflection on the subtle and monumental shifts we noticed in ourselves and our peers. **Looking back, this class was an early seed of thinking with a mindset of availability.** I recall focusing on the movement in the moment, with mindfulness. For me, it was less about improving my movements for efficiency or performance and more of a treatment, a healing space.

In my early college life, between 2010 and 2014, my perception of career building and potential artistic pathways was shaped within the emergence of music entrepreneurship in the conservatory, supporting the trajectory toward becoming a ‘portfolio musician.’⁵⁷ That is, one who constructs their careers with many parts: teaching, writing, composing and arranging, performing, recording, and any other innovative, unique combina-

tion of these roles. The labor embedded here includes booking, rehearsing, practicing, self-recording, creating social media content, instrument repair, fundraising; any nuanced aspects of labor that makes your work happen. **The assemblage of these portfolio careers and the academic methods provided to craft them can be tied to the rhetoric of the neoliberal ecology in which we live.** Neoliberalism refers to an expansive and multi-faceted economic concept that has roots in classical liberalism, a 17th and 18th century political doctrine that grew within the Enlightenment intellectual movement.⁵⁸ Presently, neoliberalism is a specific form of free-market capitalism which took shape in the 1980s.⁵⁹ Principled in globalized, self-regulating free markets and free trade, neoliberal ideology powers an idealist and individualistic pursuit of wealth.⁶⁰ Neoliberalism itself has proven to be an adaptable,

flexible, and opportunistic axiom within varying contexts.⁶¹ Musicologist Andrea Moore critiques the music institutions' push toward entrepreneurship and portfolio careers in her article, *Neoliberalism and the Musical Entrepreneur*, "By occupying institutional resources, they (entrepreneurial programs) also preclude the development of alternative models or areas of inquiry and indeed make a search for alternatives seem unnecessary."⁶² The tools we are offered in these institutional spaces are often, similar to neoliberalism, deemed the only way forward.

A portfolio career through the rhetoric of neoliberalism, prompted my musician peers and I to be flexible on-demand, to be both technically and broadly skilled at any instrument we had access to, to be adaptable toward any opportunity, and to immediately, and competitively, say 'yes' to every gig. Merit

is privileged and inefficiency is frowned upon.⁶³ At the same time, we were encouraged to innovate ourselves toward a unique path, individualize our musical output, and become a self-managed, competitive market commodity. This implies we should discover ourselves as artists, though not through a cultivation of a personal creative practice. Rather, as a self-commodified, well-marketed, individual entity who, if successful, will find freedom, security, and upward mobility within the market and the industry of music. Meeting these expectations implies that we have unending sources of energy, creativity, and a drive to constantly move forward and upward. Unchecked, this way of operating creates a scarcity mindset, rendering economically precarious ways of living and hyper-individualized self-perceptions. **I continue to witness the immense stress, burnout, and health**

impacts that these expectations leave artists to endure, within both myself and my community of peers across artistic disciplines. Trying to be everything all at once creates a life of rigor, stress, uncertainty, and isolation. What I didn't understand and couldn't predict as I began to find my post-graduation professional footing in 2014, was the impact that these neoliberal concepts and entrepreneurial expectations would have on me. My interconnected internal systems responded to these learned ideas of who I should be and how I should get there.

On this topic, I recently conversed with two peers from my undergraduate era. Courses centering music, business, and entrepreneurship were just beginning to be offered at our institution. Through group reflection and story sharing we recalled memories of the entrepreneurial and portfolio tools we were offered,

discussing the industry climate then and now. All three of us are active, full-time performers and educators, with overlapping musical interests, who each earned degrees in different instrumental studios. Peer #1 (she/her) has built a career as a multi-disciplinary artist and multi-instrumentalist songwriter, freelance performer, educator, and band-leader. She reflects on contradictions laid out during our degree:

“Part of what I was taught [through] the portfolio career method was how to be a good for-hire person, like, to be contracted out or to be in the supporting role of somebody’s art making. I was never centered as the artist, I was always centered as the person ‘getting the gig’ with the artist, or for the artist. The phone’s ringing. I always thought about [anonymous jazz faculty and active performer]. He performed with famous jazz musicians and the feeling was always like, you wanna get hired by the really good people. [The portfolio career method] didn’t center me as the artist, [learning how to do] the hiring out, or needing to [book] the gigs, and maybe needing to know how to do my taxes, and maybe being the person who needs to not be doing 10,000 things because I’m actually in charge of making the art.”

(cont’d) “Not just [being] the ‘arts worker bee.’ I feel like, once you become the artist, how much you’re sleeping and what your creative process looks like, and what helps you create art are [the] questions you ask. I feel like that wasn’t even [in] the framework.”⁶⁸

Peer #2 (he/him) is a multi-instrumentalist, educator, freelance performer, band member, self-taught audio engineer, and current graduate student. He shared an experience from his undergrad era, when he had quickly said yes to a gig for which he was “entirely the wrong fit.” I asked him how he would respond to that same gig offer now.

“It’s changed a lot for me, I am a lot more picky to what I say yes to, I’m also a lot more protective of my time, and a lot more thoughtful about my well being. That being said, I’m new to [his current city] and don’t know anybody. The calculus has gotten more complicated because of that. If I got called for [that same type of] gig, I’d have to really weigh the options for if I said yes. All that calculus I learned in our undergrad experience still applies to some extent, but I also want to be a happy, more well-balanced person than I ever have before. So, that part of the calculus plays in more than it ever has before. Before, that part (well-being) wasn’t really on the radar.”⁶⁷

In my present season of health challenges, acknowledging and responding to physiological fluctuations of what is available has taken intentional and consistent inner and outer self-advocacy. By cultivating stronger resources within myself and through community support, I have found greater, expanding assurances in what is available to me. **My experiences as a musician with chronic illness has shown me that my creative resourcefulness is not intrinsically tied to my commodifiable output.** My art is nourished as I share in reciprocity to the support I receive from my community. I continue to learn to let go, to set firmer and healthier boundaries, and to rest. I practice this through relationships and community, growing and restoring my resilience and my capacity to navigate or resist external demands and hindrances. Thinking with a framework of availability is an act of

care to myself and the people around me.

To the reader: in your current human ecology, where are the opportunities to think with a framework of availability? Can you catch the small moments that offer space to practice shifting from a lens of independence into interdependence? Are there ways that you can resist the commodification of your artistic practice? How might you more healthily perceive the care you need to give to yourself? **As an artist, what does it mean to be well?**



I would practice for as many hours as I could muster.



If I heard or felt pain and discomfort, I usually chose to push through at some level.



I developed a scarcity mindset around my practice time and worried that I would forget the material if I didn't practice it 1 trillion times in a row.



This kept me from embodying the music which led to more mistakes in both practice and performance.



I lived with intense anxiety around preparation and performance.
Fear of inadequacy prevented me from embodying the music.



I had limited capacity to know how to listen more deeply and slow down.



It was difficult for me to allow myself to tune in to my body and practice listening with the resources I did have (such as Feldenkrais).



I play for a while and take short breaks to move, stretch, breathe, eat, drink water, or just rest. This could be every fifteen minutes, or every hour. The length breaks vary; even 3 minutes of stretching or a few deep breaths counts for me!

After a few of these practice intervals, I step away from the instrument and do other activities to give my brain a break, such as tidy up a space, go on a walk, pet the dog, call a friend, or have a meal.

If my weight is unevenly distributed, like when I play vibraphone, I try to be extra gracious with my practice intervals.



I try to chip away at my practice, weaving it throughout my other responsibilities and planning it into my schedule.

If I feel a loss of focus or if I'm making continual mindless mistakes, I hear this as a signal to pause and come back another time. That might mean another day!

I am still learning to trust that the slow work I've done in small chunks will support me the next time I visit that material.

Even if my performance anxiety shows up on stage, I feel safer and more confident in the material. Usually, when I start playing my body remembers and finds ease.



CHAPTER THREE

Learning About Your Voice

DIRECTORY

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HOW DOES THE VOICE WORK?

The instrument of the voice functions like other instruments. It has a **power source**, a **source of vibration (oscillator)**, and a **resonator**.⁶⁹ The power source is the breath, the source of vibration is the vocal folds, and the resonator begins in the vocal tract.⁷⁰ The sound is **articulated** by the lips and tongue to create speech, song, or other vocalizations.⁷¹ The vibrations are then **transmitted** through a compressible material such as air, to be **received and interpreted**.⁷²



THE POWER SOURCE



The **breath**, the **power source** for audible speech and song is supported by and can be controlled by many abdominal muscles. One large, important muscle that contributes to the function of breath is the **diaphragm**. **Nestled beneath the ribcage** and above the gastrointestinal system, the diaphragm completely bisects the upper and lower body and while many muscles in the human body have a mirror pair, the diaphragm is a single, unpaired muscle.⁷³ **The diaphragm is interconnected with the ribcage and upon inhalation of air, the diaphragm flattens** at the base of the ribcage, lowering to create a vacuum for the air to fill.⁷⁴ This flattening shifts and massages the organs below the diaphragm. **Upon exhalation the diaphragm releases, raising** into a dome-like shape. While we can voluntarily



THE POWER SOURCE: Continued

breathe, we cannot consciously control the diaphragm muscle.⁷⁵ However, taking action to relax the abdominal muscles during the cycle of breath and while speaking or singing can influence a more easeful function of the diaphragm.⁷⁶ Growing a practice of intentional **belly breathing** can support more **relaxed cycles of breath** as well as a familiarity with the sensation of **releasing tension in the interconnected muscles** that both support the movement of the diaphragm and overall stability throughout the breathing process.⁷⁷ On the next page, you are invited to engage with breath while visualizing the movement of the diaphragm.

Diaphragmatic Breathing AKA BELLY BREATHING

Seated, Standing, or Laying Down

VISUALIZING DOME TO PLATE

With fingers interlocked, place your hands in front of your body to create a dome shape.

- **Inhale through your nose** while lowering your hands into a flat, plate-like shape.
- During the inhale, **your diaphragm contracts** and its shape flattens.
- **Exhale through your nose** while raising your hands back into the starting dome shape.
- During your exhale, **your diaphragm releases**, returning to its dome-like shape.

Try this hand movement for a few breaths,

imagining the diaphragm shifting as air flows in and out of your lungs.

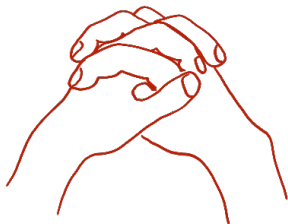


Figure 3.1
dome shape, starting position

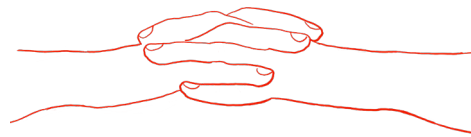


Figure 3.2
plate shape, starting position

DIAPHRAGMATIC BREATHING *continued*

BELLY BREATHING

- **Placing hands on your belly**, continuing to breathe through your nose, tuning into the lower belly as the first location of expansion as you inhale.

While the expansion of the belly during an inhale can be sensed in any position, lying on your back may demonstrate this expansion most clearly.

- After a few cycles of breath, **place one hand on your belly and one hand on your chest.**
- **Take a long, slow, full breath**, feeling the breath expand into the belly.
- As you continue to inhale, **notice how the air might expand your back, sides, and chest.**

If you notice tension, gently place your hands at the source of stress or strain, sending warmth, acknowledgement, and care to your body: "I see you, I hear you."

CONTINUE TO BREATHE.

THE SOURCE OF VIBRATION

The **vocal folds** are a very small tissue that run along the vocal tract, or the airway.⁷⁸ Upon exhalation, the **breath makes contact with the vocal folds which causes them to vibrate**, causing oscillations or sound waves.⁷⁹ The **pitch** we hear is **determined by the amount of oscillations** created by the vocal folds per second.⁸⁰ The vocal folds sit inside the **larynx**, a protective organ that is **located just above the trachea**.⁸¹ The **vocal folds are passive** and are moved by the muscles housed in the larynx.⁸² When speaking and singing, some muscles in the larynx affect a change in timbre, the quality of the sound, while other muscles affect changes in pitch.⁸³

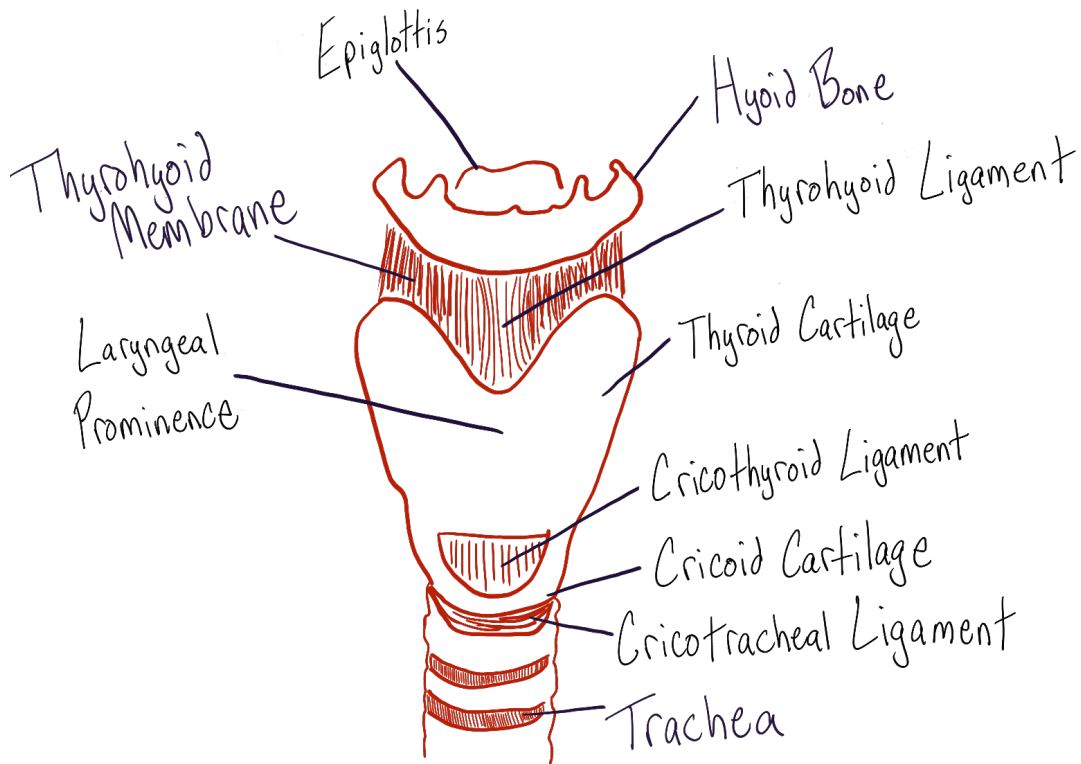
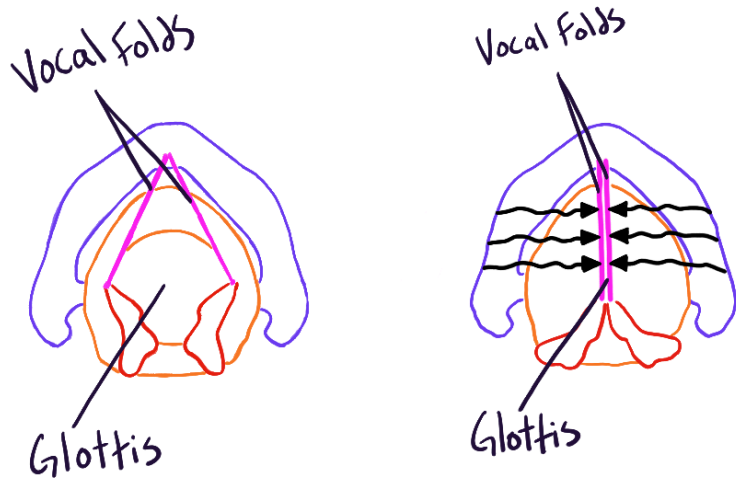


Figure 3.3: The larynx, view from the front of the throat.⁸⁴

THE LARYNX BEYOND THE VOICE

The glottis, the space between the vocal folds, can be open or closed.⁸⁶ The larynx protects the airway, engaging the vocal folds and the glottis to prevent the flow of water or food into the windpipe.⁸⁷ The larynx also supports physical actions, such as lifting heavy objects, childbirth, or defecation.⁸⁸ When lifting a heavy object, you might notice an internal abdominal back pressure, or a sense that you are holding your breath, followed by a push of air and a grunt when airflow resumes.⁸⁹ This is the glottis and vocal folds closing, then opening.⁹⁰

Below: breathing, vocal folds are open



Above: vocalizing, vocal folds vibrate, coming together

Figure 3.4: Abduction and Adduction of Vocal Folds. Looking down the throat to view the larynx.

FEELING YOUR OSCILLATOR: Seated, Standing, or Lying Down

Try out the **Diaphragmatic Breathing** on page 73
for an in-depth practice of **belly breathing**.

REPEAT THREE TIMES

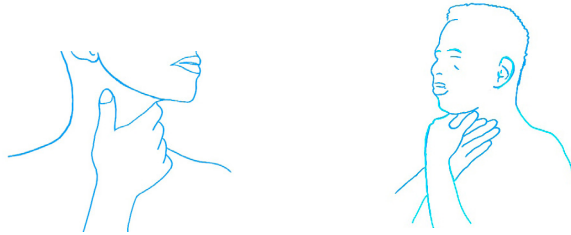
With **one hand on your belly and one hand on your chest**, breathe in through your nose, slowly expanding your belly. **Exhale through your nose**, releasing any tension.

*If a yawn arrives, it is a positive signal that your nervous system is moving
toward a calm, regulated state. Enjoy the yawn.*

INTRODUCE A HUM

- **Hear a pitch** in your mind's ear.
- After your next inhale, **hum the pitch as you exhale**.
- **Allow the sound to fade with exhale of your breath**, without forcing extra air or sound.
- You might notice a **little extra air flow** out of your lungs after the pitch stops
- Repeat this a few times.

FEELING YOUR OSCILLATOR: continued



NOTICE YOUR SOURCE OF VIBRATION

- Place one or both hands on the front of your throat.
- Repeat the above humming directions.
- As you exhale, **imagine the vocal folds vibrating** as you feel air flow through the vocal tract and feel the vibration of your humming.
- Try different single pitches, or sliding between pitches.

*As needed, take time to breathe normally,
relaxing your shoulders, jaw, and neck with gentle movement.*

As you repeat this exercise, what do you notice ...

about the rate of airflow in and out of your lungs?
about the steadiness of your voice as you repeat this exercise?
when you hum different pitches?

Figure 3.5 (above left) and figure 3.6 (above right),
two figures gently placing their hands on the throat.

THE RESONATOR

The vocal tract is a unique resonator. It can change shape, thus impacting the timbre, color, resonance, and pitch.⁹¹ This is only the starting place of resonance! **Our face and skull, neck, chest, and even down into our belly are places of resonance in the body.**⁹²

The soft palate, similar to the vocal tract, **can change in shape**, further impacting vocal tone, timbre, color, resonance, and pitch. The soft palate begins at the roof of the mouth, just behind the hard palate, and stretches into the back of the trachea (the throat).⁹³ **Try placing your tongue on the roof of your mouth and slide it back as far as you can comfortably reach.** You'll feel the roof of your mouth transition from a hard, bony tissue in the front, into a soft and pliable tissue in the back. The soft palate is one of the three trampolines of the body, along with the diaphragm and the arches of the feet.⁹⁴

I imagine the soft palate as an open umbrella, made of stretchy, pliable material, that can lift and shift with nuance. When raising my voice in pitch, I tune into the soft palate and visualize the umbrella opening toward the back of my head, lifting up and back. Dropping my jaw supports this movement. **Another helpful visualization is imagining a ball pressing into a trampoline.** The trampoline is the soft palate, and the ball presses up and back as the soft palate lifts. Learning to listen to the soft palate when singing in your higher vocal register can create **more ease, less strain, and over time, more pitch possibilities** in the upper vocal register.

SOFT PALATE STRETCH: Seated, Standing, or Laying Down

Try speaking or singing before and after this exercise, noticing any change in your tone, comfort, or range. This may be a nice addition to your warm-up routine.
[Adapted from *The Singing Book*, by Merebeth Dayme and Cynthia Vaughn.⁹⁵]

Find a comfortable position.

Open your jaw, letting it hang freely.

Take a moment to **relax** your eyes, face, jaw, and neck.

Gently massage the upper and lower jaw connection, at the base of the earlobes.

Do this for **three breaths**.

- With your jaw hanging open, **connect the tip of your tongue** behind your front teeth.
- **Breathe into your belly**, slowly.
- Begin your exhale by **vocalizing a mid-range pitch** and siren up to a comfortably high pitch, then siren back down.*
- As your pitch gets higher, **imagine the soft palate stretching** up and back.
- As your pitch gets lower, **imagine the soft palate returning** to neutral.
- **Repeat this three times**, maintaining the connection point of tongue and teeth.
- **Notice** where your voice resonates in your head and neck.

If a yawn arrives, maintain the connection point of tongue and teeth.

This will give your soft palate a stretch.

*A 'siren' is the slow ascending and descending of vocalized pitch.
Read more about 'sirens' on p. 83.

SEMI-OCCLUDED VOCAL TRACT (SOVT) EXERCISES

Seated, Standing, or Laying Down

For these exercises, you will need a straw!

Find one that is larger than a sipping straw, but no larger than a soda straw.

Why SOVT?

When the mouth is partially closed during humming, vocalizing with 'vvv' or 'zzz' sound, or through straw phonation, a backpressure is created in the airway.⁹⁶

This means that air is sent back to the vocal folds while simultaneously, air from the lungs is pushed out through the mouth.⁹⁷ This creates a partial occlusion, or closure, in the vocal tract. This back pressure decreases stress on the muscles that move the vocal folds and keeps the air within the vocal tract. This creates ease for the vocal folds while allowing the muscles in the larynx to stretch.⁹⁸

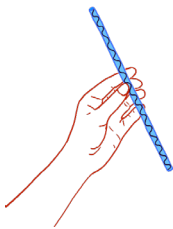


Figure 3.7 (left):
hand holding a straw

Do you speak a lot through your day?
This is a great tool for a vocal reset!

Introduction to Straw Singing / Straw Phonation

Do this for 2-3 minutes. Set a timer as needed.

- With your straw placed between your lips, **take a full breath** into your belly.
- **Begin to vocalize** as you exhale through the straw.
- You will feel a **backpressure** as the vocal folds are semi-occluded.
- If this pressure feels too intense, **try a bigger straw** or **double up** with same size.

SEMI-OCCLUDED VOCAL TRACT (SOVT) EXERCISES
continued

Introduction to Straw Singing / Straw Phonation (continued)

Make sure all of your air is being pushed through the straw.

Ensure that no air can leak out at the connection of straw and lips.

- **Repeat a gentle vocalization** with each exhale for a few minutes.
- At the end of your breath, *you may feel the build from a backpressure of air*, or you may begin to feel out of breath.
- As needed, simply **stop vocalizing and exhale**, rather than extending your vocalization to the very end of your breath.

Vocalize in a similar way without the straw.

Notice how your voice sounds and feels.

Looking for a straw?

Stainless steel, compostable, or silicone straws are great options!

Try to find something bio-degradable or reusable.⁹⁹

SOVT EXERCISE VARIATIONS

Little Bubbles¹⁰⁰

Do this for 2-3 minutes. Set a timer as needed.

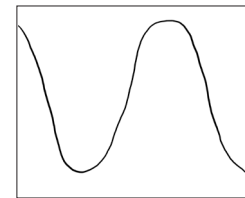
- After inhaling a full breath into the belly, **sing a single pitch** for your full exhale into the straw.
- As you sing, increase and decrease your air flow, creating dynamic swells and decays.

like this →



Sirens

Sirens are a well-known vocal warm up. When vocalizing, you **slide your pitch up and down (similar to a glissando)**, spanning the vocal range. When I do this exercise I imagine a stretched out sound wave, showing the peaks and valleys of the oscillation. **I imagine my voice is a hand crank siren**, as featured in *Ionisation* (1929-31) by Edgard Varèse or *Inuksuit* (2009) by John Luther Adams.



Repeat each direction three times (*on next page*)

After inhaling a full breath into the belly, sing a single pitch for your full exhale into the straw.

SOVT EXERCISE VARIATIONS (*continued*)

- Begin in the middle of your comfortable vocal range and slide the pitch up, ascending into your higher register, then descending to where you started.
- Try starting at a comfortably high pitch and descend down and back up, down and up.

Sirens (*continued*)

- As you slide higher in pitch, **tune into your soft palate**.
- **Feel the soft palate lift**, expanding into the shape of an umbrella in the back of your throat.
- As you descend in pitch, **allow your throat to open**.

Guide your voice where it naturally and comfortably wants land each time.

Don't force your pitch at the peaks and valleys within your range.

CHAPTER FOUR
INVITATIONS TO MOVEMENT AND BODY LISTENING

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INTRODUCTION

Making the Invitations to Movement and Body Listening

Since 2023, I've had the gift of learning and working with Katie Wood, a somatic practitioner located in Seattle, where I live. Katie has been an invaluable resource who, in our sessions, has offered a space of support in my health journey by offering nervous system healing practices, gentle movement, and musculoskeletal release. It's been an honor to collaborate with Katie in creating the following **Invitations to Movement and Body Listening**.

As percussionists, our craft comes with unique occupational hazards that leave us prone to injury. While resources around movement, mindfulness, and somatic therapies for musicians have become more accessible in recent years, it's not yet standard practice to have classes or other resources within

educational spaces. **While we have prioritized the unique needs of percussionists, any practicing instrumentalist and any human being will find support here!** All bodies are welcome.

These invitations can support injury prevention and mindful practices. Our work is informed by Soma Structural Integration, a neuromuscular integrative somatic practice informed by the work of Ida Rolf, that centers the expansion of the mind/body connection.¹⁰¹ We work within **Polyvagal Theory**, a neuroanatomical conceptualization of the interconnected roles of evolution, the vagus nerve, and the limbic system, developed by Dr. Stephen Porges.¹⁰² We additionally incorporate the polyvagal theory applications offered by trauma therapist Dana Deb.¹⁰³

This work is supported by our individual

and shared experiences with integrative movement, mindfulness, guided meditation, nervous system healing, and a seeking of healthy, holistic well-beings.

In this space we are looking through the lens of the **physiological**, which refers to all systems of the human body, its processes, and their inherent wisdoms. This supports a perspective of the body and mind as both connected and interdependent. The commonly learned and socially implied perspective of body & mind as separate and delineated spaces tends to place a higher value on the mind over the body. Here we value the inherent and learned knowledge and wisdom of both the body and the mind. We center these invitations around curiosity, specifically the action of turning toward something, without judgement. With curiosity toward the fluctuating body as a center, we emphasize a practice of

moving slowly with gentleness. Be gentle with your movement, your breath, your listening, and your self-perception.

Tuning into the senses can bring attention from one's internal world back to the external world, from inside the mind to the whole body. When the mind is stuck within cyclical thoughts, worries, to-do lists, or anxieties, the body braces and tenses to protect itself while the mind is 'out of office,' relying on its built-in reactive responses as if it is encountering danger. This may happen during a prolonged, single activity, while in a static physical position. For example, looking at a screen or spending long spans of time in a practice room or rehearsal space, especially in those that don't have windows. When you engage with the following invitations, find a safe room or space to gently guide the mind back into the body. This can allow your whole

system to reconnect to its surroundings. It's important to remember and return to a feeling of physiological safety.

Please listen what your body needs. Find support when you need it. You can find a number of mental health crisis resources on page 148. Tuning into the body, engaging with breathing practices, and moving slowly may cause things to come up. The body may have a physiological response to being heard. **Let the body release through tears or sighs. Please do what you need. Sit down, lay down, take a walk, take a break, take a nap, move around, call a friend, go somewhere safe, find support.**

This text and all of the materials in Chapter Four have been co-written by Katie Wood and Rose Martin.

MOVEMENT SNACKS

Movement To Snack On Throughout The Day

It is more beneficial to spread movement and exercise throughout the day rather than in a single, longer session.¹⁰⁴ If your day involves long periods of sitting or standing, this approach can be especially supportive. Movement snacks may help to shift one's perspective away from the 'one and done' gym mentality toward one that views movement as an interconnected and regular part of one's day. After all, our bodies want to be active! Regardless of the movement that is available to you on a given day (i.e. walking, running, crouching, dancing, sprinting, swaying, frolicking, sitting, jumping, or crawling), we evolved to move, not hold still in one position and in one place.¹⁰⁵ A key component of movement snacks is the accessibility of doing them nearly anywhere. They don't take long, and all you need is yourself, and sometimes a chair, if you'd like.

You'll see one of images as a reminder to have a movement snack!

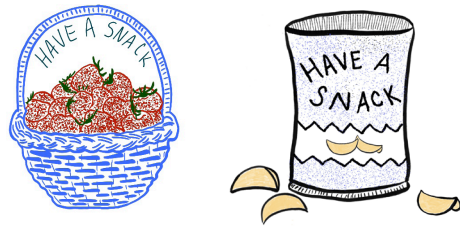


Figure 4.1: two types of snacks

INVITATIONS TO MOVEMENT AND BODY LISTENING

Grounded Listening: Laying, Standing, or Seated

WHY?

As percussionists, having a **clear sense of where the body is in space** can influence and support **intentional and easeful movement choices** in practice and performance. **Cultivate your spatial awareness** by taking a few minutes to notice the space around you and how your body feels in relation to that space. This invitation can be used before or after a practice session, as a break, before a performance, or anytime you need a moment to reset your mental, emotional, and physical state.

INTENTIONS

This invitation is **an opportunity to check in with yourself and notice** where you are at in a given moment. This is a moment when you can shift your awareness toward the body. **Be gentle with yourself and listen** to what your body needs, even if that means stopping the check-in or pivoting to something else.

HOW TO USE

Here you are **guided to notice the space around you** in a multi-dimensional way: in front and behind, to the left and the right, above and below. **Adjust this practice however you need and follow your body's lead.** For example, you may be drawn to spend more time listening to a specific spatial direction or want to adjust the overall time spent in this invitation. If there is an area of space that does not feel safe to visit, you don't have to stay there. Try to keep the general intention in mind, **listening to what your body needs and responding accordingly.**



GROUNDING LISTENING: Laying, Standing, or Seated

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- **Find** a place to be. •
- **Tune** into your breath, breathing through your nose. •
 - **Close** your eyes or soften your visual focus, perhaps toward something you notice in the distance. •
- **Notice** where your body is making contact with the surfaces beneath you. •

- read through the invitation before you begin •
- option to set a timer for 3-5 minutes, or as long as you'd like •
- repeat the Grounding Listening as much as you need •
- feel free to move or be still, to sit or lie down throughout your time here •

GROUNDING LISTENING: Laying, Standing, or Seated

Use your senses to notice the space around you

in *front* of your body

behind your body

to your *left*

to your *right*

listen to the space *above* you

feel the ground *below* you

- Notice your breath •
- Feel the surface supporting your body beneath you •
- Stay here until you're ready to move on to something else •

INVITATIONS TO MOVEMENT AND BODY LISTENING

Body Scan: Laying, Standing, or Seated

WHY?

A body scan is a simple way to **ease tension, bring energy and awareness into the body,** and **invite curiosity** into your felt, **proprioceptive** experience. **Proprioception** is a fancy word for the brain's awareness of the body and the space around it. This awareness helps us to move with more efficiency and proficiency.¹⁰⁶ For musicians, especially student-musicians, there can be expectations to change, adjust, grow, fix, or discard as you moving through a learning or working process. **Use this body scan as a moment of reprieve** from the mental and physical exertion of forward motion and upward growth. This invitation does not ask you to change *how* your body is as you tune in. **Here, you can just be.**

INTENTIONS

As you tune into your body, **be curious in your awareness,** notice what *is*. Curious intentions create opportunities for any physical, emotional, and mental tension to be released. This can help to decrease pain and to bring the nervous system into a relaxed and regulated state. **Be gentle with yourself and listen to what your body needs,** even if that means stopping the check-in or pivoting to something else..

HOW TO USE

This simple, guided meditation brings awareness to each part of the body, toes to head. It is guided lying down (prone), but can be done seated or standing as well. **Feel free to make changes and adjustments** throughout this invitation. Try to keep the general intention in mind, **listening to what your body needs and moving accordingly.**



BODY SCAN: Laying, Standing, or Seated

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- **Find** a comfortable position seated, standing, or lying on your back. This could be on the floor, on a yoga mat, or on your bed. •
- **Adjust** the position as needed for your body (i.e. bent knees, a pillow under your knees, etc.) •
- **Tune** into your breath, breathing through your nose. •
- **Close** your eyes or soften your visual focus, perhaps toward something you notice in the distance. •

- read through the invitation before you begin •
- option to set a timer for 3-5 minutes, or as long as you'd like •
- repeat the *Body Scan* as much as you need • move slowly •
- take time to pause and breathe •

BODY SCAN: Laying, Standing, or Seated

BEGINNING

- Notice your breath without needing to change it, and allow your body to sink a bit deeper into the surface beneath you.
- Bring your awareness to your feet - see if you can notice both feet and just observe what is present there.
- After a moment (5-10 seconds), shift your focus to your ankles.
- Continue this process through the whole body.

Here are some cues for places to pause your attention and curiosity:

feet, ankles, calves, knees, thighs

hips, pelvis, buttocks

low back, mid back, upper back

belly, solar plexus, chest

hands, wrists, forearms, upper arms, shoulders

throat, neck, base of the skull

jaw, mouth, nose, eyes, eyebrows, crown of the head

- Focus on awareness and curiosity, and feel free to stay longer or shorter on different areas as desired.
- Some places may be easier to sense, others may feel numb, others may feel "loud" with pain or tension.

BODY SCAN: Laying, Standing, or Seated *(continued)*

- This is normal. There is no ideal sensation. The goal is simply to bring our attention through the body, part by part, and notice.

CLOSING

- Take a few breaths through your nose.
- Notice how you feel in your body.
- If you notice pain or tension, try placing your hands on that area, sending warmth and care to your body: "I see you, I hear you."
- Embrace any sighs or yawns that come along! These are signs of your body releasing stress and your nervous system downshifting.

INVITATIONS TO MOVEMENT AND BODY LISTENING

Joint Circles: Standing, Seated, or Laying

WHY?

Regular joint movement promotes **mobility, circulation, recovery, strength, and proprioception**. **Proprioception** is a fancy word for the brain's awareness of the body and the space around it, which helps us to move with more efficiency and proficiency.

INTENTIONS

This invitation is **an opportunity to find movement throughout each major joint in the body**. This is a time to move slowly and warm the body. **Be gentle with yourself and listen** to what your body needs, even if that means stopping the movements or pivoting to something else.

HOW TO USE

This invitation guides your **movements from head to toe**. It is **guided standing up**, but **some portions can be done seated or lying down**. The lower body movements will be limited in a seated or lying position, but as always, feel free to adjust this practice however you need to. For example, increase or decrease your movements or choose your own order of events. Try to keep the general intention in mind, **listen to what your body needs** and move accordingly.



JOINT CIRCLES: Standing, Seated, or Laying

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- **Find** a place to be. •
- **Tune** into your breath, breathing through your nose. •
 - **Close** your eyes or soften your visual focus, perhaps toward something you notice in the distance. •
- read through the invitation before you begin •
- option to set a timer for 3-5 minutes, or as long as you'd like •
- repeat Joint Circles as much as you need • move slowly •
 - take time to pause and breathe •
- Following the directions below, move each joint 5-10 times in a circular motion •
 - Rotate in one direction, then switch and rotate in the opposite direction •

JOINT CIRCLES: Standing, Seated, or Laying

BEGINNING

- **Place yourself** near a wall, chair, or countertop to use for balance as needed.
- **Find** a standing position.

STARTING WITH THE HEAD

- **Slowly** begin moving your **head** in **slow circles**.

Lower your **chin** toward your **chest**.

Tilt one **ear** toward one **shoulder**.

Reach your **chin** up toward the **sky**.

Tilt opposite **ear** to opposite **shoulder**.

Bring your **chin** back down toward your **chest**.

- **Repeat several times** before switching directions.

FOCUSING ON THE SHOULDERS

- Move one arm in **slow circles** (clockwise or counterclockwise).

Keep your **arm in front** of your body.

After several circles in one direction, **switch and go the other way**.

- **Continuing with the shoulders**.

Move one arm out to the side.

Trace slow, large circles in clockwise, then counterclockwise directions.

Switch to the other shoulder and **repeat** the cycle.

JOINT CIRCLES: Standing, Seated, or Laying (*continued*)

Let your **wrist** and **elbow** be **neutral** or straight, keeping your intention focused on moving the **shoulder joint**.

SHIFT YOUR ATTENTION TO THE ELBOWS

- **Relax your shoulder** into a neutral position.

Place your **elbow near your ribs**.

Keep your **wrist neutral and straight**.

Trace slow circles in front of your body.

Switch to the other elbow and repeat the cycle.

Keep your **intention on moving the elbow** in a circular motion.

- **Repeat**, circling both arms several times in both directions.

MOVING TO THE WRISTS

- Move your **wrist** in slow circles, in one direction.

Keep **your arm relaxed** and neutral.

Switch directions, and then **switch arms** and repeat.

MOVING DOWN TO THE PELVIS

- Make **hip circles** parallel to the floor, moving both hips as a unit.

Move your **hips in slow circles** in one direction, and then the other direction.

JOINT CIRCLES: Standing, Seated, or Laying (*continued*)

- Make the circles as **small** or as **big** as you like.
- **Adjust** if you feel strain or discomfort.

As before, **relax the rest of your body** into a neutral position.

Keep your **intention around the movement** of the pelvis

Relax the shoulders, ribs, knees, or ankles.

MOVING TO THE HIPS

- Do this movement one hip at a time.
- Use a wall for support.

Lift one knee up, then open **out** to the **side**.

Lower the knee **down** and **in** toward the body.

Return to the starting position by **lifting the knee back up**.

Repeat these **slow**, clockwise **hip circles** several times

- **Switch directions**

Lift your knee into the starting position,

Lower the bent knee **down** toward the ground

Open the leg **out** to the **side**, and lift the knee **up** and **back** toward the body, **returning** into the starting position.

Repeat these **slow**, counterclockwise **hip circles** several times.

- **Switch legs** and **repeat** the entire exercise **on the opposite side**.

JOINT CIRCLES: Standing, Seated, or Laying (continued)

MOVE DOWN TO THE KNEES

- Use a wall for support

Lift one leg slightly out in **front** of you, with your **foot lifted** off the ground and your **knee** slightly bent.

Freeze your **thigh** where it is and **keep your hip and knee in a stationary position.**

Trace **circles** with your **foot**, parallel to the ground.

Trace circles in one direction, then the other, feeling the knee joint rotate.

Switch and **repeat** this process with your other leg.

FINISH WITH THE ANKLES

- **Raise your foot** off the floor and **rotate** the **ankle** in either a clockwise or counter clockwise circle.

Keep the rest of the leg **stationary.**

Trace circles in the other direction.

Repeat with your other ankle, rotating several times on each side.

INVITATIONS TO MOVEMENT AND BODY LISTENING

Spinal Sequence Roll Down: Seated or Standing

WHY?

Our spine holds us upright in gravity and supports us throughout our day. Many of us are familiar with the **strain** and **tension** caused by extended periods of sitting and computer use. **Percussionists experience additional spinal strain** while playing instruments in fixed seated or standing positions, while engaging with repetitive movements, and while **moving, lifting, or pushing** heavy instruments and equipment.

INTENTIONS

This invitation is **an opportunity to find movement, space, and ease throughout the spine**. This is a time to move slowly and warm the spine. **Be gentle** with yourself and **listen** to what your body needs, even if that means stopping the movements or pivoting to something else. **Breathe** into the movements, especially in places of tension. This is another opportunity to **practice body listening**.

HOW TO USE

This invitation guides you in a **full body roll down**, folding forward from the **head down**, and **back up** again. **Adjust this practice** however you need to, such as slowing your pace or pausing in one place for awhile. Try to keep the general intentions in mind, **listen to what your body needs**, and move accordingly. **Pause anywhere you feel tension** and **take a breath** into that area - let your body rise up slightly with the inhale, and **release the tension as you exhale**, creating space for further movement.

SPINAL SEQUENCE ROLL DOWN: Seated or Standing



BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- **Find** a place to be. •
- **Tune** into your breath, breathing through your nose. •
 - Move slowly as you follow the directions below •
- Take time to pause, breathe, and check in with yourself •
- The depth of your roll down may vary hour to hour, day to day. This is normal. •

IF SEATED

- **Find a seat**, as comfortable as you can find, ideally one that positions the bend of your knees at a 90-degree angle. •
 - If the chair is too high, prop your feet on a book or short stool. •
 - If it's too short, try adding layers of cushion to the seat. •
- Slide** forward a bit so the edge of the seat is about halfway down your thigh. •

IF STANDING OR SEATED

- **Bring** your knees hip-width apart. •
- **Place** your feet directly under your knees. •
- Be present and listen to your body. •

SPINAL SEQUENCE ROLL DOWN: Seated or Standing

ROLLING DOWN

- Let your head drop down, bringing your chin to your chest
- Slowly continue rolling down, imagining each vertebra tipping forward one at a time.
- Imagine the space between each vertebra as you continue rolling forward towards your knees

Pause anywhere you feel tension and take a breath into that area, seeing if it releases when you exhale, allowing you to roll further.

- Let your head and arms dangle, free of tension.
- Roll down as far as feels comfortable for you.
- You may end up rolling down just a few vertebrae, or you may find you've folded all the way until your chest is on your legs (if seated) or you are fully bent at the waist (if standing).
- Pause at the "bottom," wherever that is for you.
- Take a breath and feel the expansion through the back of your body.

ROLLING UP

- When you're ready, take your time to slowly begin rolling back up.
- Pull your belly button toward your spine.

SPINAL SEQUENCE ROLL DOWN: Seated or Standing *(continued)*

- Restack your spine from the bottom up, one vertebra at a time.
- Allow your arms and shoulders to relax, and let your head come up last.

CLOSING

- Take a few breaths through your nose
- Notice how you feel in your body.
- Imagine a string pulling you up through the crown of your head, with your spine dangling underneath, and see if you can feel a sensation of lift through your spine.
- If you notice tension and tightness, be invited to place your hands on the stressed area sending warmth and care to your body.
- Embrace any sighs or yawns that come along!

INVITATIONS TO MOVEMENT AND BODY LISTENING

Sensory Tuning In: Laying, Seated, Standing

5, 4, 3, 2, 1

SMELLING, TASTING, SEEING, TOUCHING, HEARING



Notice **five** things you can touch

four things you can see

three things you can hear

two things you can smell

one thing you can taste

INVITATIONS TO MOVEMENT AND BODY LISTENING

Sensory Tuning In: Laying, Seated, Standing



ATTENTION DRIFT

- what are your senses noticing? •
- let your attention drift from one sense to another •
- keep your focus on the external environment •

examples

i smell the meal my housemate is cooking

my mouth tastes minty from toothpaste

i feel my breath leaving my nostrils

my feet feel the texture of my socks
and the floor underneath me

i hear a bird sounding in the distance, and a car driving by

my eyes see how the light shines through the window

onto the leaves of my houseplant

option to
set a timer for 3-5
minutes

INVITATIONS TO MOVEMENT AND BODY LISTENING

Closing

Take time to care for yourself after your practice session, and any time you need support.

You can simply take a few intentional breaths.

Ideas for self-care:

napping

making a nutritious meal, perhaps trying out a new recipe

taking a hot shower or hot bath with epsom salts

if your budget allows, treating yourself to a massage or a day at a sauna/spa

lighting a candle

reading a book that is not for work or school

watching a movie

riding a bike

spending time with friends, perhaps at a park

making art in a leisurely way (try a craft that you have never tried, this can remove the pressure of creating something 'good')

taking a walk in your neighborhood

going on a hike

listening to music for leisure

creating something new

doing nothing

WHERE DID THE OWL land?

It's the evening of my thirty-third birthday. I sit in my workspace, visiting and visualizing one of my favorite places to go: **Carkeek Park, k^Waatəb** in Lushootseed, meaning 'place where people are sent.'¹⁰⁷ In particular, the sandy, rocky beach on the coast of the **Salish Sea (Puget Sound)**, Seated on dx^Wdə^W?abš (Duwamish), Walla Walla, Cayuse, Umatilla, and dx^Wsəq̄wəbš (Suquamish) land.¹⁰⁸ In an embodied, mindful visit, I imagine the forested ravine that is full of **maple alder, Western red cedar, and Douglas fir**. I wander near the beaver pond that intersects the coastal water and q^Wátub, **Pipers Creek**, a salmon habitat.¹⁰⁹ It's mid-November, so I watch the **Chum salmon** run up the river to spawn. I see and smell some of the salmon that have died after arriving home, as a part of their life cycle. I hear a splash up ahead,

Silhouettes and Loops

irreversible memory, taut loop, permuting. Deep in shadow, likeness stirs. Dark material mounted before light. Our silhouettes sit, within unfixable pain irrefutable beauty.

so I dream both of nectaries and dormancy of bipinnate growth and epiphytic closeness. Of the flowering, fruiting, dispersing of cycling. The composting of nourishment

mending, our shapes feel, listen into the coils. Step in time, soon to open, already taking place →



Score for *heal: to make sound (or whole)* (2025) by Rose Martin. Collage: found paper, pencil, ink. 16.5"x 12"¹¹⁰

and just past a log I see huge bursts and spurts of water. I can't see the salmon from this viewpoint, but in my visioning, I imagine it is working hard to leap atop the rapids of the creek. Back to the beach, the open air and ground is abundant with **crows, water fowl, and seagulls**. I hear the chatter of dozens of other bird species, tucked away in the trees.¹¹¹ I notice a **great blue heron** who has waded into the high tide water, which prompts a memory from an after-dark visit, hearing a heron calling as it perched in shadow.¹¹² I imagine low tide and the reveal of **tidal pools** and the abundance of **stones**, all completely covered in **tiny barnacles**. Along the beach are **larger rock, small stones, gravel, and sand**. Sounding this place in my mind, I hear the sound of my feet and feel the texture of the striped transitions of ground that change as I walk from the beach entrance to the water. Look-

ing west across the vastness of the clear and deep blue waves, I see **Bainbridge Island** to the south-west and the **Kitsap Peninsula** to the north-west, two land masses that belong to the Walla Walla, Cayuse, Umatilla, and dx^Wsəq^Wəbš (Suquamish) tribes.¹¹³ I practice looking as far as I can, imagining the center point located amost directly across the water between Bainbridge and the Peninsula: **dx^Wsəq^Wəb, Old Man House** on the shoreline of **Agate Passage**.¹¹⁴ dx^Wsəq^Wəb in Lushootseed is 'the place of clear salt water,' and is where the Suquamish name is derived from.¹¹⁵

How do we connect with the places and spaces in which we exist? How can we more deeply respond and relate our human selves to the more-than-human beings around us, their homes, and intricate ecologies? What of the stories, throughlines, and cyclical connections

that live within us, beyond times passed?

As artists, how can we respond to and converse with space, place, and ecology within our art-making?

This article offers a permeable space for multiple kinds of knowledges, amplifying the presence of and necessity for interconnectedness and relationality in our musical and non-musical living. In companionship with this writing and in rumination with these questions, I offer a score, a text-based improvisational framework titled *heal: to make sound (or whole)*. Along with the score, I offer a poem titled “silhouettes and loops,” reflective of cyclic time and the looping patterns held within the familial, ancestral, and ecological stories we each inherit. This poem may be incorporated by players of the piece or simply act as site of accompaniment and contextualization. This score embeds thirty-three words within a web, plus six outer an-

chor words. It is for two or more players and is open to any mode of improvised expression. The circular placement of the inner-web words invites the players to change positions and perspective, as they move around the web to view the words. While any modality of expression is welcome, this piece is intended to be sounded through spoken text or song, sonic objects, and any type of movement. Players are encouraged to remember and express their stories and identities through the work. The anchors, representative of what an **Orb-weaver spider** uses to hold a web in place, are directions for performer interaction: improvise, accompany, and listen in relation.¹¹⁶ Players should create pathways to return to, act upon, and remember these anchors throughout their rendition. When I visualized and remembered my embodied experiences of past visits to **k^Waatəb, Carkeek Park**, I wrote down words to

describe my thoughts and sensory experiences, both in memory and in the embodied visualization experience. These thirty-three words, in no particular order, sit on the thirty-three spokes of the spider web: **lapping, unfurl, balance, silhouette, attention, dissipate, dip, fluid, stack, grind, plumage, shadow, rock, scales, go, vast, loop, shift, simmer, root, murky, wading, fortify, cyclic, gliding, response, repair, water, splint, creak, furrow, expanse, and plop.** With the anchor web actions of **improvise** and **accompany**, I bring George Lipsitz and Barbara Tomlinson's book *Insubordinate Spaces* (2019) into the conversation.¹¹⁷ [Connections with *Insubordinate Spaces* are also discussed in *The Athena Daily* article: "Independence and Interdependence," on page 44]. Their work amplifies **improvisation** and **accompaniment** across social spaces, as tools to "fuel the creation of new social relations and new

social realities."¹¹⁸ In this creation lies an **interconnectedness**. By way of **improvising** and **accompanying**, these relations and realities connect, build upon, and bring together existing parts to form a more holistic and expansive whole.

Listen in relation activates the term **relational listening** offered by sound artist Lawrence English.¹¹⁹ English centers the relationships between sound, place, and listening to more clearly locate listening within his practice of field recording. In his 2017 paper "Relational Listening, A Politics of Perception," English states, "by examining listening and its relation to field recording, it is possible to recognize the auditory act as the point at which the creativity of the art form emerges. Thus, I argue that listening, as an agentic and effective undertaking, is the point at which creativity emerges in the practice of field recording."¹²⁰

Artificial Life 2007

(George Lewis 2007)

Page One

| | | | |
|----------|-------|-----------|-----------|
| END | SHORT | SOFT | SPARSE |
| RECORD | SOLI | SILENCE | LONG |
| PLAYBACK | SLOW | INTERRUPT | BEGINNING |
| FAR | ROUGH | SMOOTH | LOW |

BEGINNING: Enter at the same time as another group, imitating them as closely as possible. Stop playing when the other group does.

END: Enter as soon as possible at the end of another group's playing, attempting to play what they just played as faithfully as possible, for the same duration as the original phrase.

FAR: Imitate the music being played now by the group farthest in physical distance from you. Stop playing when the other group does.

INTERRUPT: Play a very loud, raucous phrase for a maximum of 3 seconds, designed to interrupt another group's playing with a contrasting element.

Above: an excerpt from *Artificial Life (2007)* by George Lewis. Players should choose a pathway that moves vertically or horizontally across sequential boxes, working with the definitions provided to inform sonic events.

Below: a piece from *Water in the Lake: Real Events For The Imagination (1979)*

WATER IN THE LAKE / 98

MELODY

Begin in silence. Continue. During the course of the piece, each of three players, among the whole ensemble, says a single word aloud, such that these three words together make a phrase or sentence in plain English.

Allow the silence to develop itself, and to guide the choice of words.

Piece ends after the third word is said.

This score is informed by time spent with other improvisational, instructional, and text-based works, such as the Fluxus book *Water in the Lake: Real Events For The Imagination* (1979) by Kenneth Maue and *Transitions and Leaps* (1990), a performance system for 2 or more people, performing any sounds/actions by Stuart Saunders Smith.¹²¹ A third score, *Artificial Life* (2007) by George Lewis, speaks closely with *heal: to make sound (or whole)*, specifically after working through this piece with groups of middle school-aged students in the summer of 2025.¹²² Lewis speaks of this form as a “situational-form,” rather than a completely open, free improvisational form.¹²³ It draws material from the sonic environment that you are actively constructing, the current situation. Sitting in a circle with our individualized setups of small, handheld instruments at the ready, I encouraged the students to place **relation-**

al listening at the center of the room, drawing on and relating to the sounds, gestures, and choices they witness from their peers. In *heal: to make sound (or whole)*, I place the spiraling title of the score in the center, as a method of intention supporting the piece. The action of **listen in relation** sits as an outer anchor, interacting with **improvisation** and **accompaniment**, as well as itself across the web. The title and central spiral of *heal: to make sound (or whole)* is simply a variation on one of the Merriam-Webster definitions of the word heal: “heal (transitive verb): to make free from injury or disease: to make sound or whole.”¹²⁴

These contemporary understandings of how we listen, sound, and relate resonates and builds with Indigenous epistemology. Reflected and circulated within *heal: to make sound (or whole)* is the work of two educators, authors,

and scholars: Q'um Q'um Xiiem (Joann Archibald) (Stó-lō) and Nerida Blair (Kulin Nation, Australian Aboriginal).¹²⁵ In Archibald's book, *Indigenous Storywork, Educating Heart, Mind, Body, and Spirit*, (2008) she outlines a framework of Indigenous storytelling as holistic theory and classroom methodology.¹²⁶ Grounded in Stó-lō and Coast Salish storywork principles, practices, and teachings that she has learned, Archibald describes this methodology as a storytelling basket, woven with **respect, reverence, reciprocity, responsibility, holism, interrelatedness, and synergy**.¹²⁷ Like stories told and re-told, and music sounded and re-sounded, these principles are applied in recurring, iterative, and spiraling ways, expanding meaning with each recurrence. **Interrelatedness** is a key element within *heal: to make sound (or whole)*, and in this article, I alternate between Archibald's interrelatedness and

the motif of interconnectedness that appears throughout this book. Nerida Blair extends Archibald's Storywork with her article "Lilyology As A Transformative Framework for Decolonizing Ethical Spaces Within the Academy."¹²⁸ In this framework, Blair offers the visual metaphor of a **waterlily, sweet potato, spider web, rhizomes, and brick walls**.¹²⁹ Proceeding with the spider web within Lilyology, I offer the **Orb-weaver spider's web in *heal: to make sound (or whole)***. Blair notes, "spiders, which weave fine, strong, transparent webs, connect across the spaces in-between to allow life's vibrations to be felt from one end to the other. Spiders' survival is dependent on knowing how the different vibrations feel."¹³⁰ The spirals strengthen and interconnect the web, like stories told and re-told, and music sounded and re-sounded. In Lilyology, each element is "interwoven and interconnect-

ed,” representing the hidden, exposed, emergent, and diverse relationships between the many voices of **Country**.¹³¹ **Country** is a word used by Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to express and describe family and ancestral identity interrelated with land.¹³² Margo Ngawa Neale, senior Indigenous art and history curator at the National Museum of Australia, describes Country “as a personage, as a living being. It holds the wisdom and it holds the knowledge and all the features ...so all the stories you need to know to survive in Country, come from Country.”¹³³ This knowledge of Country, of land and place is present within greater Indigenous epistemologies. *heal: to make sound (or whole) and silhouettes and loops* speaks with the intelligence of plants, animals, land, and water, the inherent wisdom that the body, mind, and memory carries, and knowledge carried

within story and relationship.¹³⁴ This work is also situated within a Western academic space, and my personal histories with Western knowledge, language, and communication, social, political, and relational culture, and my background within various fixed, oral, and improvised ways of composing, performing, learning, notating, and expressing sound.

"Indigenous Knowings are fundamentally different to Western Knowledges and many Indigenous researchers/educators struggle in finding their place within the framework of Western Knowledge. At the same time, non-Indigenous researchers/educators are challenged to understand, and contextualise Indigenous Knowings as ontologies and epistemologies in their own right. This book, *Lilyology*, hypothesizes this difference by navigating a space of colliding trajectories urging forward the author and other Indigenous researchers/educators to pursue alternate ways to express, operate within and find ways to play in this space."¹⁴¹ - Nerida Blair

Lilyology and storywork remind us that “oral cultures and oral Knowings,” require a non-linear way of continued listening to spiraling iterations, rather than seeking the 'right' answer or story

in a linear and singular way.¹³⁵ Lilyology offers “space to reflect on and privilege Indigenous Knowledge in the academic context.”¹³⁶ It is a compass for the space in-between Indigenous Knowledges and Western Knowledge. Lilyology links **interrelatedness**, **holism**, and **story** within Archibald’s Storywork.

Such is **improvisation**: an act of remembering our stories at the moment of new expression. Where have we been? What have we spoken and sounded? Who have we known? What are we creating? Riffing with ethnomusicologist Jessica Bissett Perea's (Dena’ina) Peoples, Places, and Projects," what are we bringing in?¹³⁷

In *heal: to make sound (or whole)* the players can improvise and listen in relation to one another's expression of story, acting as both storyteller and listener. They can oscillate roles to create a spi-

ral of reciprocal accompaniment. For Archibald, “an interrelationship between the story, storytelling, and listener is another critical principle of storywork.”¹³⁸

This connects to speaking percussion, solo or with multiple players, which is an inherently interconnected and iterative discipline, oscillating the roles of voice, hands, feet, storyteller, and listener. It is a site for story. Bonnie Whiting frames this well in *The Speaking Percussionist as Storyteller* (2014): “being closer to our everyday human desire to tell and listen to stories while engaging with one another, listeners find in such pieces an opening to their own everyday life experiences.”¹³⁹

heal: to make sound (or whole) is a living score, interrelating the many Knowledges described throughout this article. It reflects my practice of spiraling action, visiting and revisiting spaces and places in my life (including **k^waatəb**, **Carkeek**

Park), sounding and re-sounding my voice and percussion instruments, and retelling and re-membering my personal, familial, and loved one's stories. It holds my memory while reaching toward new social relations and realities. It exists as a place to listen. It will continue to build meaning, and meaning, and meaning.

(*heal: to make sound (or whole)*)



Score for *heal: to make sound (or whole)* (2025) by Rose Martin. Collage: found paper, pencil, ink. 16.5"x 12"¹⁴² See a full page, horizontal image on page 159.

OPEN ENDINGS

You've made it to the 'end'! Or, if you're like me, maybe you started here. Rather than concluding (since nothing really concludes, it only transitions), I will leave you with some thoughts on the important element of story and storytelling in this speaking percussion space. I will also share my visions for upcoming iterations of this book.

This book exists, for both author and reader alike, as a space of pedagogy, personal inquiry, and healing. In my years leading into the creation of this document, I have been presented with relational and physiological challenges that have demanded a shift in how I listen to my self and my body. Through this journey, making music with my voice and percussion instruments, both simultaneously and apart, has been a locus of processing, healing, celebrating, learning,

grieving, letting go, and always, a deeper listening. It is a place where I can listen to what my body is telling me at any given moment. I can tune into the movements and subtle gestures that I find, need, and develop throughout my musical practice.

Zooming out, I'd like to incorporate all of this work into an open-source digital space as a place where practitioners of speaking percussion can contribute ideas, experiences, and pedagogical material. **This current book is the start of a bigger conversation.** An open-source space would create a cumulative site for the emergent and collective knowledges held within the percussion community. Percussion continues to be an emergent art form, and speaking percussion especially so - why not create a space to reflect that more holistically?

My re-centering of the body has brought me closer to a personal understanding of Steve Schick's *corporeal sensibility*.¹⁴³ To me, corporeal (of, or relating to the body) sensibility (an attitude or mindset, a central perspective) extends the definition of the percussion instrument from its sonic capabilities as objects toward the embodied being that, through physical movement, can create a sound in conversation the sonic object. Aiyun Huang expands on corporeal sensibility, stating that "the most definitive percussion instrument is that of the performing body."¹⁴⁴ Since the physical being who creates the sound is a site of many kinds of knowledge and personal histories, I believe this reorientation points toward a centering (or re-centering) of story. The meaning I make here is inclusive of the sound object and its held stories, since the musical-cultural histories of humans and sound objects are deeply intertwined.¹⁴⁵

In *The Speaking Percussionist as Storyteller*, Bonnie Whiting describes the "proliferating performance art" of speaking percussion as "tied not only to the traditions of experimental music and theater but also to traditions in narrative and storytelling."¹⁴⁶ She goes on to describe three elements of the framework within narratology: text, story, and fabula.¹⁴⁷ **Text** (which includes both vocal utterances and words) acts as a framework for the **story** itself, whose events are told and received through **fabula** (what happens, when, and how).¹⁴⁸ Whiting says, ".. in speaking percussion music, the most relevant element becomes this middle space: the place where the story meets people."¹⁴⁹ **The middle space is of great importance. It's the gray area, the unknown, the site of emergent and generative conversation, activity, world-building, and healing.** This middle space converses with the in-between

space of Lilyology, offered by Nerida Blair (Kulin Nation, Australian Aboriginal). Lilyology is a framework created by “interwoven and interconnected” elements (waterlily, sweet potato, spider web, rhizomes, and brick walls).¹⁵⁰ [Read about Blair and the Lilyology framework on page 110 in *The Athena Daily* article “where did the owl land?”] Lilyology is created with multiple epistemologies, thus is a site where stories live, interrelate, and emerge.¹⁵¹ These in-between spaces between knowledges shine light on both the ways that individuals carry story and how these stories are shaped through the different systems of knowledge the individual brings to the table.¹⁵² **In a similar way, the speaking percussion middle space is co-created with multiple elements. Text, story, and fabula interconnect choice-making, identity, technique, gesture, story/stories, and the independence and interdependence of**

multiple voices (physical, metaphorical, and artistic). As performers, we repeat our stories (the pieces, improvisations, or songs) each time we play for different audiences and for ourselves and our peers in practice and rehearsal. The iterative nature of performance, and especially so with speaking percussion music, expands the possibilities of what the middle space can hold. The storywork principles offered by Jo-ann Archibald (Stó-lō) teach us that the foundation of meaning-making is story.¹⁵³ **When it is told and re-told (or when the music is sounded and re-sounded), new meaning is created with each iteration, with each sonic and social recurrence.** [Page 110 in *The Athena Daily* article “where did the owl land?” further discusses Archibald's offerings within her *Indigenous Storywork* framework.]

In future iterations of this book, I would

like to develop *Chapter One* to include both new exercises and variations on the initial exercises. I will create companion audio recordings of select *Steady Pulse Exercises*, the *Steady Pulse Etudes*, as well as short improvisations that proceed from the material offered earlier in the chapter. In a similar fashion, I would like to expand the exercises for speaking text in *Chapter Two* to better support the various ways that voice and percussion relate to one another in the speaking percussion setting. This will include further examples connecting the exercise material to pieces within the speaking percussion body of repertoire. My understanding of resonance has been informed by the work of Kristin Linklater through her interviews, videos, and her book *Freeing the Natural Voice: imagery and art in the practice of voice and language*.¹⁵⁴ Building on Linklater's work, I would like to expand *The Resonator* from *Chapter Three: Learn-*

ing About Your Voice to include dynamic ways into feeling resonance throughout different places in the body while vocalizing. Future versions of *Chapter Four: Invitations to Movement and Body Listening* will include deeper context on Polyvagal Theory, a helpful scaffold to understand the intricacies of the nervous system and how it responds to the world around us.¹⁵⁵ Polyvagal Theory has provided great insight into the chronic illness that I live with and informs the material that Katie Wood and I created. The next version of this book would include additional invitations to movement, sensory processing, and breathing that didn't make it here. My vision of a future version includes a few new chapters. First, a chapter on the topic of songwriting and self-accompaniment, and exercises for the singing voice. I will include companion songs, compositions, and recordings of my own work. Second, a chapter that

opens a conversation into speaking percussion in collaboration, which would include performance recordings and conversations with past, current, and forthcoming collaborators. Third, a chapter that brings movement, gesture, and choreography into greater focus in the speaking percussion pedagogical context. This could invite practitioners to experiment with the physicality of percussion through playful, multi-media exercises.

My hope is that the ideas, connections, authors, scholars, musicians, composers, stories, and bodies of knowledge in this book circulate through percussion and musical communities at large, extending and expanding beyond this initial offering. **May we sound and re-sound our stories within our practices.** May that spark new sonic and social pathways that interconnect with what has already been sounded. In the middle space of speaking

percussion, a web made of many perspectives, I find and re-member my stories. I witness peers, colleagues, and friends share their stories and I grapple with the stories of those around me. Most importantly, I continue to learn and re-learn that the body is an inherently wise being. It carries our stories and is always speaking. It is waiting for us to listen.

ENDNOTES

- 1 This builds on the work of Bonnie Whiting on the topic of speaking percussion. Bonnie Whiting, "The Speaking Percussionist as Storyteller," In *The Modern Percussion Revolution: Journeys of the Progressive Artist*, ed. by Gustavo Aguilar and Kevin Lewis, 84-111, Routledge, 2014. Bonnie Whiting, "Chapter Three: Representative List of Pieces for Speaking Percussionist," In "Narratives on Narratives, From Utterance to Stories: Finding Context for the Speaking Percussionist," D.M.A Dissertation, UC San Diego, 2012.
- 2 *ibid.*, 37.
- 3 "Able-bodied" is a broad term, used here in quotes to indicate the learned and shared set of assumptions framed within our cultural and social understandings of moving, doing, and being 'normal.' This demarcates and names any understanding of ability outside of this assumed range into the category of disability.
- 4 Peter V. Paul and Donald F. Moores, *Deaf Epistemologies: Multiple Perspectives on the Acquisition of Knowledge*, Gallaudet University Press, 2012.
- 5 Ray Barnhardt and Angayuqaq Oscar Kawagley, "Indigenous Knowledge Systems/Alaska Native Ways of Knowing," in *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, 36 (1), 2005, pp. 8-23.
- 6 "Center Map," Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, accessed November 22, 2025. <https://www.wildflower.org/visit/gardens>
- 7 Cornell Lab Bird Cams, "Great Horned Owl Cam Launches At Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center As Female "Athena" Returns," YouTube, March 4, 2024, 1 min., 50 sec., https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PGxNik6zMUc&list=PLXJZ8Lf9KIx4_dm-l2Ul5rqD31rgmXHzF&index=70.
- 8 "Great Horned Owls," Cornell Lab, All About Birds, accessed November 22, 2025. <https://www.allaboutbirds.org/cams/wildflower-great-horned-owls/>
- 9 quinn mcnichol, <https://quinnmcnichol.com/home.html>. quinn is a very dear friend, colleague, and housemate.
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- 11 "the daily seequins, volume 9," quinn mcnichol, accessed November 22, 2025. <https://quinnmcnichol.com/artwork/4884885-the%20daily%20seequins%20vol.9.html>.
- 12 "Great Horned Owls," Cornell Lab, All About Birds, accessed March 18th, 2025. Screenshot of live camera feed.
- 13 Charles Scudamore, *Observations on M. Laennec's method of forming a diagnosis of the diseases of the chest by means of the stethoscope, and of percussion; and upon some points of the French practice of medicine*, London: Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown, and Green, 1826, page 10.
- 14 Stuart Saunders Smith, *...And Points North* (Smith Publications, 1990).
- 15 In 2022, I wrote a paper discussing the ethics of performing the Passamaquoddy text as a non-Native performer, reflecting on and critiquing my past performances, ti-

tled "Performing the Disunion of Death: ...*And Points North* by Stuart Saunders Smith." I presented this paper at the AMS-SMT joint conference in 2023.

16 Smith, ...*And Points North* (1990).

17 *ibid.*

18 Sylvia Smith is the founder of Smith Publications and Sonic Art Editions. Since 1974, Smith Publications has been publishing "scores and recordings of serious, progressive American Music," <https://www.smith-publications.com>.

19 Smith, ...*And Points North* (1990).

20 Steve Schick released, with permission, audio recordings of ...*And Points North* in companion to his book *The Percussionists Art: Same Bed Different Dreams* (University of Rochester, 2006). I was so honored that Stuart had enjoyed my version of ...*And Points North* so much so that he invited me to recording a video version in 2018 (though this never occurred).

21 Smith, ...*And Points North* (1990).

22 *ibid.*

23 *ibid.*

24 "Infinite Practice," Pala Garcia, accessed November 22, 2025. <http://www.pal-agarcia.com/infinite-practice/>

25 Rzewski, Frederick, *To The Earth* (1985) for speaking percussionist.

Text: Homeric hymn. Instrumentation: four pitched clay flower pots, played with knitting needles. Pitches: Db, F, G, B.

26 Neal, Kate, *Self-Accusation* (2014) for solo percussion. Text by Peter Handke. Instrumentation: bowl, 5 small steel pipes, 2 saw blades, 3 Indian bells, 2 shakers, guiro, box, sleigh bells, voice with various 'noise' directions.

27 Schick, Steve, *A Percussionist's Art: Same Bed, Different Dreams*, (2006), page 152. 'Verispeed' refers to a feature on analog playback machines, such as a tape deck, that can speed up or slow down the pitch and tempo simultaneously. Here, verispeed is used to indicate an intentional, interrelated variety of tempi. This would be different than playing 'glacially slow,' is a term frequented by percussionist and educator Bonnie Whiting, to indicate a process of drastically slowing a musical passage, with looser parameters of pulse.

28 *ibid.*

29 Polynome, metronome app, <https://polynome.net/>.

30 Digital Audio Workspaces (DAW) such as GarageBand, ProTools, Adobe Audition, or Audacity, are used to record, edit, and produce audio files.

31 Stuart Saunders Smith, . . .*And Points North*, (Smith Publications, 1990), Movement I.

32 Alexis Lamb, *Familiar* (self-published, 2019), score excerpt.

33 Gates, Linda. *Voice For Performance: Training the Actor's Voice*, (Applause Books, 2000), 206.

34 *ibid.*

35 Melissa Wang, *Your Past Self Is Dead*, (self-published, 2025), score excerpt

36 Stuart Saunders Smith, *Lyric*, (Smith Publications, 2013, 2017, 2022), score excerpt.

37 "Infinite Practice," Pala Garcia, accessed November 22, 2025. <http://www.pal->

agarcia.com/infinite-practice/

38 This is a term frequently used by Bonnie Whiting in teaching and coaching settings. It indicates an ultra-slowness, slow enough to break down the pulse and phrasing.

39 "SM58," Shure Microphones, accessed November 22, 2025. <https://www.shure.com/en-US/products/microphones/sm58?variant=SM58-LC>. Example of a common stand alone microphone.

40 George Lipsitz and Barbara Tomlinson, *Insubordinate Spaces: Improvisation and Accompaniment for Social Justice* (Temple University Press, 2019), 14.

41 "Lawrence English," Lawrence English, accessed November 22, 2025, <https://www.lawrenceenglish.com/>

42 Lawrence English, "Relational Listening: A Politics of Perception," *Contemporary Music Review* 36, no. 3 (2017): 128, <https://doi.org/10.1080/07494467.2017.1395141>

43 Rose Martin and John-Carlos Perea, "Improvisation, Accompaniment, and Relational Listening," forthcoming chapter in *The Oxford Handbook of Global Music History*.

44 Shunryu Suzuki, *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind*, (Shambala Publications, 1970).

45 A part of our lessons structure was Kassa setting a timer for three minutes, each of us taking turns improvising for that duration.

46 Thought salad came out in that moment as a variation on the phrase, 'word salad,' frequented by percussionist and educator Bonnie Whiting.

47 Physiological here refers to all systems of the human body, its processes, and their inherent wisdoms. This informs a perspective of the body and mind as both connected and interdependent.

48 Hippocrates. *Of the Epidemics*. 400 B.C.E. Translated by Francis Adams. Book I, Section II, Second Consitution, Paragraph 5.

49 'Soma' refers to Soma Structural Integration, formerly Soma Neuromuscular Integration, a body work practice with roots in Rolfing® Structural Integration, developed by Dr. Ida Rolf. <https://www.soma-institute.org/>.

50 "History of Ida Rolf and Rolfing® Structural Integration," About Rolfing, Dr. Ida Rolf Institute, accessed November 28, 2025, <https://rolf.org/history.php>

51 Ida Rolf, *Rolfing and Physical Reality*, 1990, page 213.

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54 "The Feldenkrais Method," About, accessed November 28, 2025, <https://feldenkrais.com/about-the-feldenkrais-method>.

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56 Stephen A. Paparo, "Somatic Self-Care for Music Educators," in *The Oxford Handbook of Care in Music Education*, edited by Karin S Hendricks, Oxford University Press, 2023, abstract.

- 57 Andrea Moore, "Neoliberalism and the Musical Entrepreneur," in *Journal of the Society for American Music* 10, no. 1 (2016), 39.
- 58 Manfred B. Steger and Ravi K. Roy, *Neoliberalism: A Very Short Introduction*, (Oxford, 2021), 3. "liberalism," History and Society, *Encyclopedia Britannica*, accessed November 28, 2025, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/liberalism>.
- 59 Manfred B. Steger and Ravi K. Roy, *Neoliberalism: A Very Short Introduction*, (Oxford, 2021), 2.
- 60 *ibid.*
- 61 *ibid.*, 127.
- 62 Andrea Moore, "Neoliberalism and the Musical Entrepreneur," in *Journal of the Society for American Music* 10, no. 1 (2016), 39.
- 63 George Monbiot, "Neoliberalism, the ideology at the root of all of our problems," *The Guardian*, April 15, 2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2016/apr/15/neoliberalism-ideology-problem-george-monbiot>
- 64 Tricia Hersey, *Rest Is Resistance: A Manifesto*, (Little Brown Spark, 2022), epitaph.
- 65 Jonathan Stern, "There Are Never Enough Spoons," in *Diminished Faculties: a political phenomenology of impairment*, (Duke University Press, 2021), page 160-162.
- 66 Norman Doidge, *The Brain's Way of Healing: Remarkable Discoveries and Recoveries from the Frontiers of Neuroplasticity*, (Penguin Books, 2016).
- 67 Rose Martin, self-transcribed audio recording of conversation with two peers, November 26, 2025.
- 68 *ibid.*, This speaker references a 'calculus,' a commonplace, personalized freelance 'equation' that weighs the pros and cons for each gig offer. I've adopted a triangular calculus: pay, enjoyment, community/networking. Similar to the portfolio musician, the decision to take or decline a gig offer is based on a semblance of many parts
- 69 Scott McCoy, *Your Voice, An Inside View*, (View Press, 2006), 87-89.
- 70 *ibid.*
- 71 Kristin Linklater, *Freeing The Natural Voice: imagery and art in the practice of voice and language*, (Quite Specific Media Group Ltd., 2006), 13-17.
- 72 Robert Thayer Sataloff, *Voice Science*, (Plural Publishing, 2007)
- 73 *ibid.*, 95. McCoy, *Voice Science* 87.
- 74 *ibid.*, 89.
- 75 McCoy, *Voice Science* 89.
- 76 "Breath," *Voice Science Works*, accessed November 22, 2025, <http://www.voicescienceworks.org/breath.html>
- 77 Meribeth Dayme and Cynthia Vaughn, *The Singing Book*, (W.W. Norton & Co., 2014), 268-269.
- 78 McCoy, *Voice Science* 107.
- 79 *ibid.*
- 80 *ibid.*
- 81 McCoy, *Voice Science* 107. *Voice Science Works*, "Inside the Larynx," accessed November 22, 2025, <http://www.voicescienceworks.org/inside-the-larynx.html>.

- 82 Voice Science Works, "Inside the Larynx," accessed November 22, 2025, <http://www.voicescienceworks.org/inside-the-larynx.html>
- 83 *ibid.*
- 84 Figure 3, The larynx, view from the front of the throat.
- 85 Figure 2, Abduction and adduction of vocal folds. Looking down the throat to view the larynx. Adapted from a diagram found on www.voicescienceworks.org/inside-the-larynx.html.
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- 91 Meribeth Dayme and Cynthia Vaughn, *The Singing Book*, (W.W. Norton & Co., 2014), 272.
- 92 Kristen Linklater, *Freeing The Natural Voice* (Quite Specific Media Group, 2006), p. 12-17.
- 93 Meribeth Dayme and Cynthia Vaughn, *The Singing Book*, (W.W. Norton & Co., 2014), 281
- 94 *ibid.*
- 95 Meribeth Dayme and Cynthia Vaughn, *The Singing Book* (W.W. Norton & Co., 2014), 281.
- 96 Voice Science Works, "What is Straw Phonation," accessed, November 22, 2025, <http://www.voicescienceworks.org/straw-phonation.html>
- 97 *ibid.*
- 98 *ibid.*
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- 100 Ingo Titze, "Vocal Straw Exercise," YouTube, 4 min., 36 sec., <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0xYDvwvmBIM>.
- 101 'Soma' refers to Soma Structural Integration, formerly Soma Neuromuscular Integration, a body work practice with roots in Rolfing® Structural Integration, developed by Dr. Ida Rolf. <https://www.soma-institute.org/>.
- 102 Stephen Porges, *The polyvagal theory: neurophysiological foundations of emotions, attachment, communication, and self-regulation*, New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2011.
- 103 Deb, Dana, *The Polyvagal Theory In Therapy*, New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2018.
- 104 "Why You Should Move Throughout The Day," Harvard Health Publishing, accessed November 22, 2025, <https://www.health.harvard.edu/heart-health/why-you-should-move-even-just-a-little-throughout-the-day>
- 105 "Humans Evolved To Exercise," Scientific American, accessed November 22, 2025.

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- 107 "Coast Salish Place Names," The Waterlines Project, Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture, https://www.burkemuseum.org/static/waterlines/images/maps-and-images/waterlines_map_medium.pdf.
- 108 "Maps," Native Land Digital, <https://native-land.ca/>
- 109 "Course and Features," Piper's Creek (Seattle), Wikipedia, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pipers_Creek_\(Seattle\)#cite_note-2](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pipers_Creek_(Seattle)#cite_note-2). Duamish for, "dropped down."
- 110 The found paper was in a friend's supply of collage materials. The spider web paper seems to be a handmade, textured paper. The botanical cutouts are from "The 1985 Sara Steele Calendar," September and November, and *The Audobon Society of Waldflowers*, Chanticleer Press, 1978. The paper used for the thirty-three words and the anchor words had been painted on the backside, leaving a cloud-like coloring on the unpainted side.
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- 112 "Great Blue Heron Sounds," Cornell Lab, All About Birds, https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Great_Blue_Heron/sounds.
- 113 "Maps," Native Land Digital, <https://native-land.ca/>
- 114 "Suquamish," Bainbridge Historical Museum, <https://www.bainbridgehistory-museum.org/our-community-past-to-present/suquamish>.
- 115 *ibid.*
- 116 Alejandro Soler and Ramón Zaera, "The secondary frame in spider orb webs: the detail that makes the difference," *Scientific Reports* 6, 31265 (2016), introduction.
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- 121 Kenneth Maue, 55: "Melody", *Water In The Lake: Real Events For The Imagination*, Colophon Press, 68. Stuart Saunders Smith, "Movement IV", *Lyric*, Smith Publications, 2013/2017.
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- 126 Jo-ann Archibald, Q'ium Q'ium Xiem, *Indigenous Storywork: Educating the Mind*,

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128 Nerida Blair, "Lilyology as a transformative framework for decolonizing ethical spaces within the academy," In *Decolonizing Research: Indigenous research as methodology*, edited by Jo-ann Archibald Q'um Q'um Xiiem, Jenny Bol Jun Lee-Morgan, and Jason De Santolo. London: Zed Books, 2019.

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135 Blair, "Lilyology as a transformative framework for decolonizing ethical spaces within the academy," 213.

136 *ibid.*, 211.

137 Jessica Bissett Perea, "Introducing [Our] Peoples, Places, and Projects: Indigelogical Ways of Doing Global Music History Homework," in *The Journal of Musicology* 40, no. 3 (2023): 255-267. This riff is riffing on conversations on this framework in graduate seminar classrooms, in collaboration, and in writing with colleague and collaborator John-Carlos Perea (Mescalero Apache, Irish, Chicano, German), <https://johncarlos-perea.bandcamp.com>.

138 Archibald, *Indigenous Storywork*, 32.

139 Bonnie Whiting, "The Speaking Percussionist As Storyteller," in *The Modern Percussion Revolution*, edited by Kevin Lewis and Gustavo Aguilar, Routledge, 2014, 110.

140 The found paper was in a friend's supply of collage materials. The spider web paper seems to be a handmade, textured paper. The botanical cutouts are from "The 1985 Sara Steele Calendar," September and November, and *The Audobon Society of Wildflowers*, Chanticleer Press, 1978. The paper used for the thirty-three words and the anchor words had been painted on the backside, leaving a cloud-like coloring on the unpainted side.

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147 *ibid.*, 88.

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151 Peter V. Paul and Donald F. Moores, *Deaf Epistemologies: Multiple Perspectives on the Acquisition of Knowledge*, Gallaudet University Press, 2012.

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156 Bonnie Whiting, "Chapter Three: Representative List of Pieces for Speaking Percussionist," In "Narratives on Narratives, From Utterance to Stories: Finding a Context for the Speaking Percussionist," D.M.A Diss., (UC San Diego, 2012).

157 The found paper was in a friend's supply of collage materials. The spider web paper seems to be a handmade, textured paper. The botanical cutouts are from "The 1985 Sara Steele Calendar," September and November, and *The Audobon Society of Wildflowers*, Chanticleer Press, 1978. The paper used for the thirty-three words and the anchor words had been painted on the backside, leaving a cloud-like coloring on the unpainted side.

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APPENDIX A

Representative List of Pieces for Speaking Percussionist, 2025¹⁵⁶

- Aguilar, Gustavo. *Wendell's History*, 2007. Text: Wendell Barry. Instrumentation: glockenspiel. Commissioned by Steven Schick.
- Andersen, Simon Steen. *Split Point*, 2002. Non-texted vocalizations. Instrumentation: Snare drum/sandpaper blocks.
- Aperghis, Georges. *Le Corps a Corps*, 1978. Text: Georges Aperghis. Instrumentation: Zarb. Commissioned by Jean Pierre Drouet
- Aperghis, Georges. *Graffitis*, 1980. Text: Georges Aperghis/non-texted vocalizations. Instrumentation: multiple percussion.
- Aperghis, Georges. *Le Coup de Foudre*, 1985. Non-texted vocalizations. Instrumentation: Multiple percussion/foot organs. Commissioned by Gaston Sylvestre.
- Billone, Pierluigi. *Mani. Gonxha*, 2011. Non-texted vocalizations. Instrumentation: Two Tibetan singing bowls.
- Billone, Pierluigi. *Mani. de Leonardis*, 2004. Non-texted vocalizations (Greek)/Pierluigi Billone. Instrumentation: glass bowls/spring coils.
- Billone, Pierluigi. *Mani. Mono*, 2007. Non-texted vocalizations/Pierluigi Billone. Instrumentation: spring drum.
- Brooks, William. *March Peace*, 1987. Non-texted vocalization. Instrumentation: Snare Drum
- Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Mario. *Platero Y Yo, para Narrador y Guitarra*, op. 190, VOL. I, 1960. Text by Juan Ramón Jiménez. Original instrumentation: guitar and voice. Transcribed for marimba by Joel Garza.
- Chen, Carolyn. *VIN DIESEL = I END LIVES*, 2011. Text: found/Carolyn Chen. Instrumentation: multi percussion /live electronics and video. Commissioned by Bonnie Whiting.
- Chen, Carolyn. *What we swallow turns around*, 2011. Non-texted vocalization. Instrumentation: timpano/preparations. Commissioned by Dustin Donahue
- Clay, Danny. *Proverbs*, 2010. Text: Terry Hermsen. Instrumentation: Snare Drum

- Clay, Danny. *Three Fantastic Houses*, 2009. Text: found (children.) Instrumentation: multi/found objects. Commissioned by Austin Murphy.
- Clearfield, Andrea. *round for three muses*, 2017. Text: Andrea Clearfield. percussion solo (with vocals), percussion trio (with vocals), electronic sound. Commissioned by a consortium organized by Yun Ju Pan.
- Dargel, Corey. *Perpetual*, 1998. Text: Corey Dargel. Instrumentation: found objects/tape (for 1-3 players.)
- Deane, Christopher. *A Robe of Orange Flame*, 2005. Text: Christopher Deane /found text (vietnam war era.) Instrumentation: resonant sheet metal.
- Delio, Thomas. *As Though*, 1994. Non-texted vocalizations. Instrumentation: multiple percussion.
- Deyoe, Nicholas. *Things Written in the Snow no. 3: Sitting Alone in a Frozen Parking Lot*, 2012. Non-texted vocalization, sung. Instrumentation: found metals. Commissioned by Bonnie Whiting.
- Deyoe, Nicholas. *Useless no. 1*, 2010. Text: Nicholas Deyoe. Instrumentation: multiple percussion. Commissioned by Brian Archinal.
- Deyoe, Nicholas. *Lullaby*, 2011. Non-texted vocalization. Instrumentation: multiple percussion. Commissioned by Brian Archinal.
- Enslin, Mark. *Sonata Quijada*, 1988. Text: Mark Enslin. (describing the US-aided propaganda campaign against the Allende's government in Chile.) Instrumentation: found/multiple percussion.
- Globokar, Vinko. *Dialog Uber Erde*, 2002. Non-texted vocalizations. Instrumentation: multiple percussion (water instruments.)
- Hall, Lawton. *All Your Thens for Now*, 2013. Text: Tim Davis: The Ladies Tee. Consortium commission.
- Heider, Werner. *Pendant*, 1980. Text: Latin syllables/Werner Heider. Instrumentation: Marimba.
- Henze, Hans Werner. *Prison Song*, 1977. Text: Ho Chi Minh prison diary. Instrumentation: multiple percussion/tape.
- Hills, Cory. *The Percussive Art of Storytelling*, 2005-2020. Text: Various/Cory Hills. Instrumentation: multiple percussion.

- Hindman, Dorothy. *Tapping the Furnace*, 2006. Text: Dorothy Hindman (after civil war texts.) Instrumentation: multiple percussion.
- Hodkinson, Sydney. *Kerberos*, 1990. Text: after Dante (Italian.) Instrumentation: snare drum.
- Hosokawa, Toshio. *Sen VI*, 1993. Non-texted vocalizations. Instrumentation: multiple percussion.
- Johnson, Tom. *Music and Questions*, 1988. Text: Tom Johnson. Instrumentation: five resonant metals (pitched).
- Jolley, Jennifer. *How to be a Deep Thinker in Los Angeles*, 2009. Text: Kendall A. Instrumentation: multiple percussion.
- Kitzke, Jerome. *The Earth Only Endures*, 2003. Text: Allen Ginsberg: Hum Bom, Walt Whitman: Reconciliation from Drum Taps, The Tewa: Mad Coyote Madly Sings, The Lakota: The Earth Only Endures. Instrumentation: multiple percussion/marimba. Commissioned by Tom Kolor.
- Lamb, Alexis. *Familiar*, 2019. Text: Lamb. Multiple percussion (variable.) Consortium led by Kevin Keith.
- Lamb, Alexis. *The Yellow Wallpaper*, 2014-15. Text: Charlotte Perkins Gilman. Vibraphone.
- Lane, John. *Possible Paths*, 2004. Text: Ann McCutchan. Instrumentation: multiple percussion.
- Lane, John. *Five Places West*, 2010. Text: Ann McCutchan. Instrumentation: multiple percussion.
- Lane, John. *With Hidden Noise*, 2006. Text: Kazuaki Shiota. Instrumentation: multi/tape.
- Lane, John. *Nocturne*, 2009-10. Text: Todd Boss. Instrumentation: mbira.
- Lang, David/Steppenwolf. *Born to be Wild*, 1967. Instrumentation: multi. Commissioned by Steven Schick.
- Leak, Graeme. *And now for the news*, 1985. Text: tape only, Vietnamese newscasts Instrumentation: multiple percussion(/prerecorded voices.)
- Leeds Carson, Ben. *A is for Azimuth and Arnica*, 2007. Texts: found/Ben Leeds Caron.

- Instrumentation: found objects/indeterminate. Commissioned by Chris Froh.
- Lewis, George. *North Star Boogaloo*, 1996. Text: various/found, Instrumentation: Multi/tape. Commissioned by Steven Schick.
- Lockwood, Annea. *Amazonia Dreaming*, 1987. Non-texted vocalization. Instrumentation: Snare drum/preparations.
- Lucier, Alvin. *The Sacred Fox*, 1994. Text: Alvin Lucier/non-texted vocalizations. Instrumentation: singing into resonant vessels.
- MacBride, David. *Envelop*, 1972. Non-texted vocalizations. Instrumentation: multiple percussion.
- Matamoros, Gustavo. *Williams Tells of Rights*, 1997. Text: Gustavo Matamoros. Instrumentation: Snare drum/loudspeakers. Commissioned by Jan Williams.
- Matthusen, Paula. *The old language is the old language, with its lance and greaves, broken shields and hammered vowels*, 2017. Non-texted vocalizations. Instrumentation: two percussionists with crash cymbals, singing, resonant feedback, live electronics. Commissioned by Jennifer Torrence and Bonnie Whiting.
- McCandless, Richard. *Childhood*, 1983. Text: Rimbaud (Illuminations.) Instrumentation: multiple percussion.
- Neal, Kate. *Self-Accusation*, 2014. (7') Text: Peter Handke (passages from *Self-Accusation* 1966). Commissioned by Vanessa Tomlinson.
- Nielson, Lewis. *Lenguas Encubiertos*, 2011. Text: Roque Dalton. Instrumentation: Multiple percussion/autoharp. Commissioned by Jennfer Torrence.
- Otte, Allen. *As An Algebra*, 1994. Text: Don Bogen. Instrumentation: Mbira.
- Otte, Allen. *Tribute, Benjamin Linder, VFW*, 1986. Text: Homer/NY Times. Instrumentation: multiple percussion/ found objects.
- Parenti, Susan. *Exercise no. 4*, 1987. Text: Susan Parenti. Instrumentation: multiple percussion.
- Pettit, Brandon. *Aguas de Marco*, 2008. Text: Brett Halliday. Instrumentation: marimba. Commissioned by Bonnie Whiting.
- Pierzack, Bob. *Endangered Bananna #3*, 2011. Text: Bob Pierzack. Instrumentation: timpani. Commissioned by Eric Derr.

- Pierzack, Bob. *Quest to Sleep*, 2011. Text: Bob Pierczack. Instrumentation: multiple percussion/vibraphone. Commissioned by Jennifer Torrence.
- Roque-Alsina, Carlos. *Etude pour Zarb*, 1984. Non-texted vocalizations. Instrumentation: Zarb.
- Rosenberger, Katharina. *oh n(o)w. . . roar all over and over again*, 2017. Text: e.e. cummings. Instrumentation: multiple percussion. Commissioned by Kaetlyn King Ruders, Paul. Alarm, 1983. Non-texted vocalizations. Instrumentation: multiple percussion/digirido.
- Rzewski, Frederic. *Lost and Found*, 1985. Text: Frederic Rzewski. Instrumentation: body percussion/props. Commissioned by Jan Williams.
- Rzewski, Frederic. *To the Earth*, 1985. Text: Homeric Hymn. Instrumentation: flower pots. Commissioned by Jan Williams.
- Rzewski, Frederic. *Fall of the Empire*, 2007. Text: Jefferson, Sawyer, Rzewski, Twain. Instrumentation: multiple percussion. Commissioned by Allen Otte.
- Senn, Dan. *Peeping Tom*, 1988 Text: Dan Senn. Instrumentation: Snare Drum.
- Shepard, Sam. *Tongues*, 1978. Text: Sam Shepard. Instrumentation: multiple percussion.
- Shepard, Sam. *Savage/Love*, 1981. Text: Sam Shepard. Instrumentation: multiple percussion.
- Shlomowitz, Matthew. *Hi Hat and Me*, 2010. Text: Matt Scholmovitz/non-texted vocalizations. Instrumentation: Hi-Hat. Commissioned by Claire Edwardes.
- Smith, Stuart Saunders. *Songs I-IX*, 1981. Text: Stuart Saunders Smith. Instrumentation: multiple percussion.
- Smith, Stuart Saunders. *The Authors*, 2006. Text: Dickenson, Whitman, Kerouac, Thoreau. Instrumentation: marimba. Commissioned by James Dietz.
- Smith, Stuart Saunders. *By Language Embellished I*, 1989. Text: Stuart Saunders Smith. Instrumentation: multiple percussion.
- Smith, Stuart Saunders. *Family Portraits: Delbert*, 1997. Text: Stuart Saunders Smith. Instrumentation: multiple percussion (found.)

Smith, Stuart Saunders. . . .*And Points North*, 1983. English Text: Stuart Saunders Smith. Passamaquaddy Translation: David Francis and Joseph Nicholas. Instrumentation: multiple percussion/bird songs. Commissioned by Steven Schick.

Smith, Stuart Saunders. *Clay Singing*, 2017. Text: Stuart Saunders Smith/non-texted vocalization. Instrumentation: multiple percussion.

Smith, Stuart Saunders. *Lyric*, 2013/2017/2022. Text: Stuart Saunders Smith. Instrumentation: multiple percussion.

Stockhausen, Karlheinz. *Nasenflugelltanze*, 1990. Text: Karlheinz Stockhausen/non-texted vocalizations. Instrumentation: drumset/multiple percussion.

Trevino, Jeffrey. *Being Pollen*, 2011. Text: Alice Notley (tape only.) Instrumentation: Multiple percussion. Commissioned by Bonnie Whiting/Johannes Fischer.

Ung, Chinary. *Cinnabar Heart*, 2009. Text: Chinary Ung. Instrumentation: Marimba. Commissioned by Nancy Zeltzman (intermediate marimba music project)

Welsch, James. *Call me Ishmael*, 2006. Text: Melville. Instrumentation: Marimba. Commissioned by Bonnie Whiting.

Whiting, Bonnie. " . . . *perishable structures that would be social events*," 2008/2011 Text: Various (from interviews with composers.) Instrumentation: multiple percussion/found objects.

Williams, Evan. *Mantras I, II*, 2012. Text: Gayatri Mantra, Sanskrit with English transliteration. Instrumentation: multiple percussion. Commissioned by Alex Rolfe.

Wood, James. *Rogosanti*, 1986. Non-texted vocalizations. Instrumentation: multiple percussion. Commissioned by Steven Schick.

Wood, James. *Elanga N'Kake: singing to his craft*, 1993. Multi-percussion, invented non-texted vocalizations. (15') Written for Robert Van Sice

Wysocki, Bryan. *At A Time*, 2019. (8') Solo Vibraphone and Percussion (low drum, high drum, 4 automated instruments) Text created by the performer in their native language.

Wysocki, Bryan. *Tapestry*, 2018. (12') Solo Marimba Text created by the performer in their native language.

Younge, Bethany. *Electric Speak! Junk for Me!* 2016 Text: Younge. Instrumentation:

Electric household objects.

Younge, Bethany. *Yappy Pace*, 2017. Text: Younge. Instrumentation: homemade motors, oscillator, small battery powered objects, two speaking percussionists. Commissioned by Bonnie Whiting and Jennifer Torrence.

Zimmerman, Walter. *Glockenspiel*, 1982. Text: Jean Paul. Instrumentation: multiple percussion and keyboard instruments. Commissioned by Robyn Schulkowsky.

Zimmerman, Walter. *Riuti*, 1979/80. Text: Walter Zimmerman. Instrumentation: multiple percussion.

APPENDIX B

A Handful of Podcast and Internet Resources

PERCUSSION

[The @Percussion Podcast](#)

[Concert Honesty Podcast](#)

[The Elementary Music Teacher Podcast](#)

[Make Moments Matter: Music in Education](#)

[Percussion Perspectives Podcast](#)

[Pete's Percussion Podcast](#)

[Relevant Tones Podcast](#)

[The Trap Set With Joe Wong](#)

[Decolonizing the Music Room](#)

[Project Spectrum](#)

[Cory Hills: percussive storytelling](#)

[The Black Swamp Podcast](#)

CLASSICAL MUSIC

[Classically Black Podcast](#)

[Classical Queeros](#)

[Institute for Composer Diversity](#)

[Melanated Moments In Classical Music](#)

[Trilloquy](#)

ARTS, MUSIC, SOCIETY, AND CULTURE

[The 21st Century Creative](#)

[All My Relations Podcast](#)

[ArtsAby In Conversation: Arts and Accessibility](#)

[HOMOGROUND CAFE](#)

[Included: The Disability Equity Podcast](#)

[KEXP: Sounds of Survivance](#)

[Native America Calling Podcast](#)

[The Neurodivergent Musician Podcast](#)

[The Neurodiversity Podcast](#)

[The Trans Narrative Podcast](#)

[The Queer Creative](#)

[Queer WOC podcast](#)

[Versed: The ASCAP Podcast](#)

ORGANIZATIONS

[AFRORACK](#)

[ChicagoMusic.org: The Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago](#)

[Mantra Percussion](#)

[Spectrum Ensemble](#)

[Sphinx Music](#)

[The Nap Ministry](#)

APPENDIX C

Mental Health Resources

Crisis Text Line: Text CONNECT to 741741 (24/7)

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: CALL 1-800-273-8255 (24/7)

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline TEXT or CALL 988 (24/7/365)

[www.988lifeline.org]

Disaster Distress Hotline TEXT OR CALL 1-800-985-5990

National Domestic Violence Hotline: LIVE CHAT SUPPORT:

VISIT www.thehotline.org or CALL 1-800-799-SAFE (7233)

TEXT START to 88788 (24/7)

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services National Helpline (SAMHSA):

CALL 1-800-662-HELP (1-800-662-4357) (24/7/365)

VISIT: www.samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline

National Eating Disorder Hotline: TEXT NEDA to 741741 (24/7)

CALL 1-800-931-2237 (M-Th 9AM-9PM EST; Fri. 9AM-5PM EST)

LGBTQIA+ Crisis Lifeline from The Trevor Project:

LIVE CHAT SUPPORT www.thetrevorproject.org/get-help/

CALL 1-866-488-7386 or TEXT "Start" to 678678

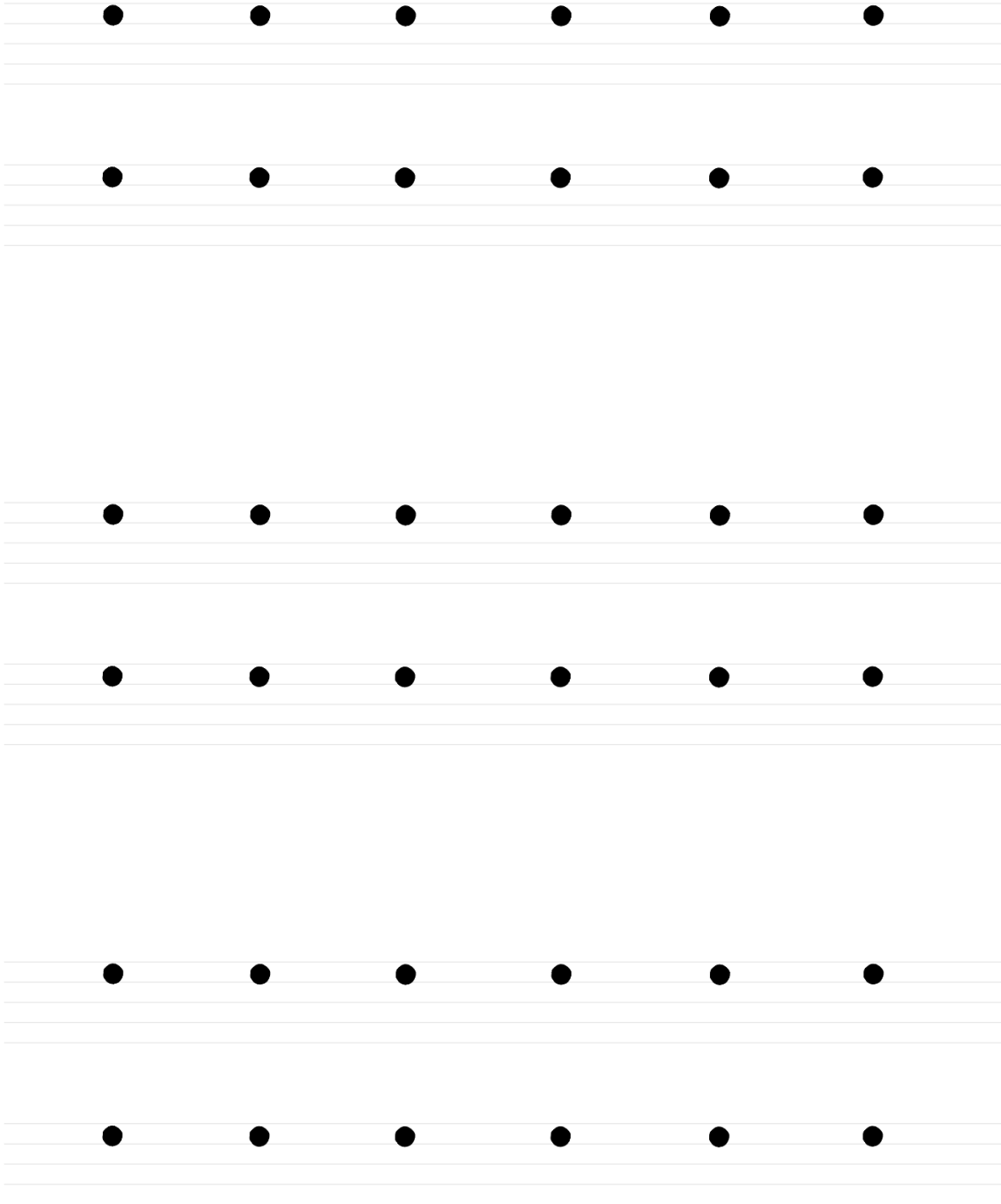
Blank lined writing area consisting of 12 sets of horizontal lines.

Blank manuscript paper with ten sets of five horizontal lines.

Blank lined paper with 12 sets of horizontal lines.

Blank manuscript paper with ten sets of five horizontal lines.

Blank Steady Pulse Staff Paper











heal: to make sound (or whole) (2025) by Rose Martin. Collage: found paper, pencil, ink. 16.5" x 12"¹⁵⁷

(heal: to make sound (or whole))
open score, digital version two

