

Abstract

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Other Spaces – Other Sound Spaces.
Space as a Catalyst for an Art of Openness

When musicians leave their customary rehearsal and performance spaces and one day play their instruments in a park or in a cemetery or start singing while up in a tree, or in a barber's chair or even lying under a pile of rocks (see film examples), then it usually involves more than just a superficial change in location. A deep-seated longing is often behind this relocation -- a desire to sweep away the connotations that the standard spaces and sound spaces have in the university establishment with their conventional rituals – a wish to discover one's own spaces for action and thought in terms of an art and culture of openness.

A number of famous musicians have been making such excursions onto open “stages” in independent artistic and cultural landscapes for quite some time; but in music universities such ventures are rare or even non-existent. This raises the conceptual question of how much importance is given to exploratory spaces when teaching music students.

The film examples that supplement the paper show excerpts of performative explorations and experiments from students of the Mozarteum University Salzburg in Austria. The explorations vary between body and sound theater in diverse everyday scenarios, in locations in Salzburg or during international travels. As they search for new open and communication spaces, the young people also try to discover and invent themselves as solo or ensemble musicians on individually chosen performance sites. They frequently use dialogue- like improvisations to convey their instrumental and vocal resonations with whatever is audible and visible at their respective performance location.

The film excerpts are part of an artistic research project that has been going on for several years (project leader: Helmi Vent). “Other Spaces – Other Sound Spaces” focuses on the meaning of personally relevant spheres of growth and communication over the course of students' development as musicians. It is when they review their own artistic biography that the project participants ultimately become aware of the fact that it is not so much the externally managed and allocated spaces, but primarily their biographically relevant space, which enables the participants to make a thorough analysis of the underlying factors of their own activities as musicians within the context of cultural and social developments.
