

**FACULTY OF ART
UNIVERSITY OF PÉCS
DOCTORATE COURSE**

KLARISSZA MÉDEA SZABÓ

FORM EFFECTS

The effect of space-in-space forms on emotions

Thesis of DLA dissertation

Supervisor: Márta Nagy DLA, Professor Emerita

2020

I have researched for forms that can influence positive emotions. In this regard, I have been making acoustic sculptures for a long time in order to generate some sort of positive emotions from the observer or the beholder involving interactions with my works. Audible effects can also be attached to these appearing in the air or during motion. Therefore, this complex phenomenon affects the observer. I am examining sound effects of how they raise emotions in the experiencer while they approach towards the work. I am looking for an answer that I should create my work with full of positive emotions if I intend to diffuse the same feelings through my work, and to trigger positive emotions from the observer as well.

According to E. H. Gombrich, we are living in a historical world where the image can replace the function of written word. Thus, you might ask: what can a picture represent better than human voice or written language? Why are pictures able to communicate more effectively? Generating emotion of visual impression was raised the attention first in ancient times. Horace compared the effects of theatre with oral speeches in his *Ars Poetica*:

„Only heard things do not shake our souls,

Like the viewer can sense itself with clear eyes”

(Epistles II/3., *Gombrich*, 2003, pp. 92-107).

Following Gombrich's thoughts, there are three different variables for relevant interpretation of an image: code, title, and context. Visualisation can be conducive to the complementarity of language and image. These two sovereign channels relieve the reconstruction. It is the origin of classical commemorative and memo technics, analysed by *Frances Yates*, that inspire people to alter every verbal communications form into visual ones. The more bizarre and implausible form is created, the more effective process will be. However, this context must be confirmed by previous traditional criteria as well. If these connections discontinue, communication will cease (*Gombrich*, 2003).

Every human made artwork has information and generates impression. However, there can be many factors – from their cultural background and taste through sociological ones – that may influence and define the process of the viewer's interpretation. Thus, I am raising such subjective area that needs a complex system, which can scientifically prove handle spatial forms, and its sound and effects as one. If I observe the work from the viewer or the recipient's point of view, I conclude that the work should enter the viewer's mind and soul through their senses. Consequently, the knowledge of physiological and psychological factors are essential.

For me, the form, the motion, and the sound mean synthesis, while the form is more essential. Principally, it is because I observe my theme as a visual artist, a sculptor. My works create sound, they move, or can be moved, which intentionally create positive emotions for the

observers. According to the Lacan thesis, the object as a sound is significantly created by the reduction of sound. “We cannot help regarding sound as an ontological status, as ‘nature’ and ‘culture’ mean the way between the harmony of the natural and the law created by mankind. (...) As someone sacrilegiously regards pleasure as a standard (most of them profess that art’s most important task is to give joy for the soul; however it is unacceptable assertion, it is even sacrilegious to declare that – Laws II, 655d)” (*Dolar*, 2011/4. pp. 59-75).

People are fundamentally curious creatures regardless of what sociological area they grew up and what cultural habits they gain. The expression of curiosity can be physical contact with the work, the question of “May I touch it?”. This simple act may be the source of joy, therefore the interaction generates positive emotion. And when the viewer has already touched the form, and forms have had interactions with each other, which even give sound, loud ones (what the viewers could only imagine before), that will develop another positive power. This can be intensified with a method, that is known as the tuning of brainwave. Thus, these hidden waves would turn sensible for the brain that create positive energy for the senses. The form should be simple, because simplicity, regularity, and rotundity reflect harmony against complicated and chaotic forms.

The cause for choosing this topic is deeply personal, which is the core motivation, a driving force, the fundamental element of my whole work. It is about personally experienced situation of a man closed to me who was diagnosed with mental disorder, and he had not been treated to reveal real causes of his disease by psychiatrists for long period. They could only ease the symptoms of his illness. There are many other agents that can influence human’s behaviour and condition.

Mechanisms of action

After the introduction of my dissertation, I will focus on mechanisms of action, including environmental effects and form effects. While I am explaining the feelings as results of the actions, I am also focusing on the explanation of joy, and happiness, in terms of the ideas of Nicolai Harman, Rudolf Arnheim, Erwin Panofsky, the eudemon, and the theory of flow. In this part elements and themes of aesthetics, philosophy, psychology, physiology will be found symbiotically. I will also discuss the difference between art working and the works can be found in the phenomena of the living world. According to Harman, while the metaphysics of beauty in nature is a matter of reflection, it may not become incremental reflection from it. Kant completely implemented reflection into aesthetical method with reflective judgement.

Arnold Schönberg writes the following about music in *Theory of Harmony*: „The subject of music composing is usually divided up into three topics: the study of harmony, counterpoint, and the study of form. The study of harmony deals with chords and their possible connections, particularly with their tectonic, melodic, rhythmic values, and relative ponderousness. The counterpoint is engaged with sound movement, particularly with motive based combination” (Arnheim, 1979, pp. 384).

The study of form explains the indispensable knowledge for structures and results of musical ideas. In other words, the theory of music does not deal with what sounds harmoniously, but how the tendentious content should be embodied in such ways. However, assembling all the elements of a music work into one homogeneous piece is only one aspect of this problem, because the condition of music cannot be executed if the elements of those groups are built in such method that they can be combined into every combination that results clear chords (Arnheim, 1979).

As my dissertation includes not only the form, but its sound, therefore the field of acoustics follows the definition of emotion.

Through the explanation of sound effects I am going to focus on the definition of conceptual and operational acoustics starting it from the music of Spheres, emphasizing István Szirtes’s article about the spread of sound wave in closed space. I am writing about the coding of resonance into sound waves involving the definition of vibration of materials, and about the works of Tesla and Themerin. I am also going to mention the categorisation of instruments (idiophone, membranophone, cardophone, aerophone), in terms of Sachs-Hornbostel classification.

Therapy

Apropos of sound effects, one of the most important topic in my central interest is about using the sounds and vibrations with human body as the therapy of vibration, tuning of brainwave, and meditation.

The therapy is the study for treatment of diseases, and it is the sum of treatment method of rehabilitation. The aim of the treatment is to decrease the symptoms of illness, increase the standards of living, and to prevent further deterioration of health. The therapy can be achieved in two ways. One of them is the symptomatic treatment when bad symptoms are ceased, but the root cause is not cured. The other is the cause therapy when the state of the whole body is treated, according to holistic view, in order to extinguish the cause of illness.

Concerted combination treatments of physical therapy and physiotherapy can warrant the recovery of the patient. Physical therapy stands for the application of physical equipment, while physiotherapy uses natural devices and methods (*Brencsán, 2002*).

While more participants – as subjects and collaborators – can be found in vibration therapy and brainwave tuning methods, meditation does not need participants. Meditation as a ritual can be achieved by one person where the body and the soul meet, and can similarly be as effective as the tuning of brainwave. I am writing about art therapy that can be motion based, or music, or fine art therapy. All these are such creative activities where the participants experience wordless message

These are all such creative actions where all participants are involved with word-less interpretations. I will keep continuing the train of thought from the basic role of art therapy to the importance of interaction and the experience of touch.

Own working process

After discussing the theme of therapy, my own working process will be introduced. In this chapter, I am going to talk briefly about works, artists, workshops, and music works that have inspired me much. I am going to mention forms created by waves, instruments related to my researching field (sound drum, mbira). I will also highlight the works of the following artists: Sempere Eusebio, Sachiko Kodama, Theo Jansen, Danielle Lemaire, Pierluigi Pompei, Andrea Wach, Rommert Calje, Klaus Osterwald, Barry Hall, Tom Shannon, Bernard Reyboz, Tomas Saraceno, Mariko Mori, Makoto Orisaki, Zaha Hadid, Claire Twomey, Daniel Libeskind, Ceal Floyer, John Cage, László Vidovszky, Lőrinc Borsos, György Galántai, Gyula Várnai, Endre Koronczai, Antal Lakner, Barbara Guttman and Klára Orosz.

Workshops: Europees Keramisch Werkcentrum, Hello Wood.

I will close my dissertation with showing the results through my own art work, including the followings:

Sounds and effects of regular and irregular shapes through cast half-porcelain formed relations, interactive sound works: *SoundForest*, *Blindforest*, and my latest works.

I will also write about my work, *SoundForest*, in which I tried and sum up all the experiences that I had previously written about sounds and effects in my dissertation. This work of mine was made in 2014, terracotta, metal, wood, size: 2.5×3×3 meter. I focused on the sound of forms, their influences on each other, and their total effect. The ultimate aim is to

generate positive human emotion. The 3×3 meter ground is covered by terracotta leaves. Above them, in the middle, there are clay strings hanging, within the area sized 2.3×1×1. you can enter the installation. To walk through the installation, there is a doorway created as the negative space of the composition. Therefore, an inner-deep psychological alteration can be experienced if we go through the doorway. The decision is in the hands of the visitor, whether they would go through it or not. If they decide to do it, they will have to walk on the leaves. During stepping onto the leaves, the visitor's moving make the strings rock that will sound pleasantly, like making music. Rule of perception is used by the *SoundForest*. Its material existence and the visitor's interaction produce my work's function. The question is: does always a nice and pleasurable experience come first before demolition and destruction? If yes, it is more normal to amplify the pleasing over the displeasing experience.

After this, consequences and the closing of the dissertation will come.

Bibliography

Arnheim, R. (1979). *A vizuális élmény, Az alkotó látás pszichológiája*. Budapest: Gondolat.

Brencsán, J. (2002). *Orvosi szótár*. Budapest: Medicina.

Dolar, M. (2011/4). A hang-objektum. *Replika, Hangember*, 59-75.

Gombrich, E. H. (2003). A látható kép. In H. Özséb, *Kommunikáció I-II*. (pp. 92-107). Budapest: General Press.