

The Sincerity of a Gesture: Why Even When the Music Stops Our Hands Do Not

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This presentation foregrounds the role of non-musical gesture in performance. I explore how gesture is able to serve as a constituent in the performer's cognitive processes and how gesture grounds a performer in unclear musical time. I focus on the different ways in which gesture connects the performer to the work, by examining instances in which gesture can facilitate entrainment in moments in which entrainment is problematized.

I analyze three performers, wherein I focus on how gesture interacts with the music in unique cases; difficult passages, the band dropping out, and meter changes. I then consider gesture longitudinally highlighting how gesture is used during the same song over multiple performances of The 1975's "Sincerity is Scary." Even though the ways in which the song's time are problematized differ over each of the multiple performances, gesture is still used to connect the singer with the original time.