

## Rhythm and Phrasing in Confined Spaces

Steven Robbins

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1. Imagine that there is a large canvas to paint in front of you
  - a. Put some color on the canvas using various brush strokes
  - b. Be sure to use all of the canvas
  - c. Paint high, low, shapes, dabs, flicks, long strokes, short strokes
  - d. Including improvised atonal music with this activity is great fun
2. Now imagine the same canvas wraps all the way around you
  - a. Put some color all around you
  - b. Be sure to fill as many spaces as you can
  - c. Note how many options you have for using your immediate space
3. Statues
  - a. Become a statue
    - i. Your statue could be tall, short, round, jagged...
    - ii. Play a piece of music with clear phrasing
    - iii. At the end of the phrase, students change statues
    - iv. Students should try to change into a different space and shape each time, utilizing that canvas that surrounds them
    - v. Try to guide students to find the space as opposed to demonstrating
    - vi. For the virtual conference, I used my own recording of *Guárdame las Vacas* by Luys de Narváez (1490-1547)

vii. I also enjoy using improvised piano music for this activity, though it is certainly not necessary

viii. A hand drum or other instrument could be used to establish phrase length before utilizing a recording

#### 4. Living Statues

- a. Similar to statues, but students move smoothly from one statue to the next over the course of the phrase
- b. There are options as to how this is done
  - i. Students could have a new statue in mind and try to arrive at the right moment in the phrase (more difficult)
  - ii. Students could just move slowly and change statue directions at the end of the phrase (easier)
  - iii. Students could move through the first phrase and freeze as a statue through the next phrase (Inhibiting a response)

#### 5. Goodbye Statues

- a. Now that the piece is familiar, use movement efforts to emphasize rhythmic elements instead of statues
- b. Movement efforts can include dab, flick, punch, wring, glide, float...
- c. Move rhythmic elements around in space
  - i. Rhythmic elements can be moved linearly across the space to include phrasing
- d. Perform with recording, allowing students to playfully explore the rhythm

#### 6. Rhythm with body percussion

- a. Clapping should be light and circular
  - i. A simple question to ask is "Is our body percussion musical?"

- ii. Move the clapping through space to engage the mind/body connection

- b. Rhythmic motions do not necessarily have to make sound

- i. Evaluate a student's usage of time, space and energy

- ii. See if the movement matches the character of the music they are working with

## 7. Putting rhythm into motion

- a. For the virtual conference, I used my own recording of Romance del Pescador by Manuel de Falla (1876-1946)

- b. The rhythm was introduced using the first couple of phrases from the recording

- c. Any recording or live performance by the teacher would work just as well

- d. After becoming familiar with the rhythmic material, move in reaction to the music, bringing the rhythm to life

- e. In the video lesson, I took the rhythm of this piece a little slower than I usually here it to try to adapt to the virtual environment, giving more time to process

## 8. Wrapping it up

- a. Small spaces still offer a multitude of movement opportunities

- b. Simple changes can have a substantial impact on experience

- i. Face a different direction

- ii. Restrict usage of parts of the body, such as arms

- iii. Utilize only one part of the body, such as tongue or ankles

- iv. Sitting, standing, lying down

- v. Facing another student (If you are able to)

vi. Creating shapes with the body

c. In all movement, strive for musicality

Thank you for attending our conference! Please stay tuned in to the AES, there is much, much more to come!