

9 Percussion theater

The drama of performance

AIYUN HUANG

... the true state of the percussionist is that physical action. Corporeal sensibility is essentially the most definitive instrument.¹ STEVEN SCHICK

The most definitive percussion instrument is that of the performing body. The approach to physical action and the awareness of body defines who we are as players; it gives us character and empowers our performance. The physical action of playing, whether it is timpani in an orchestra, marimba in a solo recital, or tin cans in percussion ensemble, can equally demonstrate musicianship and deliver musical expression. Awareness of the performing body enables us to connect physical actions and turn them into meaningful sounds and musical communication.

In this chapter, I discuss repertoire that illuminates the *seeing* aspect of percussion performance through works which cultivate, dissect, and expand on the special relationship between *seeing* and *hearing*. I present two approaches to the incorporation of theater from the performer's perspective. First, the action of playing percussion is, in itself, theater; we learn to become aware of our actions and then amplify them so they become an indispensable part of our musical expression. By leveraging our theatrical potential through the lens of gesture, we are enabling percussion performance to become theater by activating the multisensory experience.

Second, in theater works, we are asked to extend our skills through the incorporation of text, singing, dancing, or a combination of these. In this approach, the members of the French percussion group *Trio le Cercle* – Willy Coquillat, Jean-Pierre Drouet, and Gaston Sylvestre – were the first generation of performers to create a repertoire of theater pieces through their collaborations with a group of composers that includes Mauricio Kagel, Georges Aperghis, and Vinko Globokar. With their boundless imagination and fearless attitude, *Trio le Cercle* was influential in incorporating theater into their roles as percussionists. In addition to performing, one member of the group, Jean-Pierre Drouet, was also an important composer of percussion theater works.

The term percussion theater is used here to refer to works in which the *seeing* aspect is crucial to the understanding of the work. Other terms have been proposed previously and used to refer to overlapping bodies of works.

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These terms include *instrumental theater*, often used to refer to the works of Kagel; *théâtre musicale* commonly used to refer to the French school including the compositional works by Aperghis, Globokar, and Drouet; and *composed theater*, a term put forward by Rebstock et al. to describe composers such as Arnold Schoenberg, John Cage, Kagel, and Aperghis who “approach the theatrical stage and its means of expression as *musical material*.”²

All percussion works are inherently theatrical because of the visceral nature of percussive gesture and corporeal sensibility required of the performer. In this chapter, I focus on repertoire that requires in-depth examination by the percussionist in the use of gesture, movement, voice, and dance in the forming of an interpretation and performance. I contextualize the chapter through investigations of the ways technology, perception, composition, and performance practice have shaped the creation of percussion theater.

Technology

Before the arrival of the gramophone, music was experienced live. When people attended concerts, the audience, for the most part, watched and listened to the musicians performing. Technological advancements in the last century enabled us to experience music in alternative modes through radio, sound recordings, movies, and as background music. These developments offered the audience the opportunity to compartmentalize their senses in experiencing music. As a result, new technology has at times encouraged us to experience music through our listening sense alone. In fact, as technology advanced, new types of listening emerged to couple with new technology. For example, when high fidelity arrived, many people preferred to stay at home and listen to recordings through their speakers rather than attend concerts; they argued that recordings sounded better than live music in halls with poor acoustics. When people began to use headphones, they developed a new intimacy with the music and its performers because of the proximity of the sound source to the ear.

There is no doubt that technology changed the habit of music consumption and listening experience. It also caused changes in performance standards, altered musical communication channels between performer and audience, and forced performers to shift priorities in music-making to adapt to new contexts. First, through editing, fewer mistakes are heard on discs. Over time, what we heard on recordings became the new standard for live performance. Second, performers could not always rely on the convention of a live concert to provide the multisensory communication

available to them when performing. Third, technology pushed performers to adapt to new contexts and to come up with different strategies depending on the situation. For example, the strategy used in recording a piece of music can be quite different from the strategy used in performing it (e.g., use of metronome, recording out of order). The issue of technology is relevant in this discussion because of its implication on the performer and audience relationship and its influence on the performer's approach in forming an interpretation.

Perception

So much of musical communication is expressed through bodily gestures. There are two major types of distinguishable gestures in playing: instrumental and ancillary (also termed expressive) gesture. Instrumental gestures are the movements required for sound production while ancillary gestures are not required for sound production, but play a crucial role in the understanding of musical intention. Musicians use ancillary gestures intuitively and/or consciously to form an inherent relationship with the music.³

Ancillary gestures are essential and crucial in musical expression both from the performer to the audience in music-sharing and among musicians in music-making.⁴ For example, ancillary gestures may include gestures to signal structural points to help audiences anticipate and participate in the drama of music. Ancillary gestures are essential in chamber music playing as the bodily gestures can greatly affect synchronicity. Seeing the music helps the audience comprehend a deeper dimension of communication that hearing alone cannot always convey.

Michael Schutz and Scott Lipscomb used a professional marimbist, Michael Burritt, as a subject to test audience perception of long notes versus short notes.⁵ The study recorded video and audio (separately) of Burritt playing long and short notes on three registers (high, middle, low) of the marimba. In addition, dampened strokes were recorded and used for audio only. The audio and the visual recordings were separated to create different pairings (e.g., short note visual with long note audio), and these examples were then tested on subjects (Northwestern University non-percussion music students). The study found that, first, there is no audible difference between the stroke types – the decay of the short stroke is indistinguishable from that of the long stroke. Second, the subjects determined the length of the stroke primarily through the visual representation of the stroke length rather than through the length of the sound. Last, while unable to create notes that were acoustically long and short, Burritt created

long and short *sounding* notes through gestural conditioning in the audience's perception. The sensory integration communicated the musical idea and covered up the acoustical shortcoming of the marimba.⁶ More recent studies by Vines et al. examined nonverbal communication through "expressive body movement and musical sound, and found that musical expressive intention had the greatest impact when the music was seen"⁷ (rather than heard or heard and seen at the same time).

These studies affirm thoughts in my own musical experience as a listener and performer. First, a multisensory experience is the preferred way to experience music-making. By omitting visual information, both the performer and the audience are "robbed" of true musical communication. Second, percussionists have long used their intuition to "act out" what their instruments cannot naturally do. Furthermore, the short history of contemporary percussion has allowed percussionists to be explorers without following established performance traditions. This helps explain why percussionists are willing to accept, and furthermore to embrace, challenges when asked to extend their performing bodies to incorporate other elements.

Compositional development

Many composers have taken special interest in the gestures of percussion playing and have made the specifics of percussive gestures (e.g., preparatory, sounding, or silent) essential musical material in their compositions. Cage's approach to theater in the 1950s and Kagel's instrumental theater are perhaps the most influential departure points.

In his 1937 "The Future of Music: Credo,"⁸ Cage put forward the notion that music is the organization of sound (including noise and silence), and "percussion music is a contemporary transition from keyboard-influenced music to the all-sound music of the future."⁹ Cage taught us to appreciate noise not as "the other" but as an integral part of music. With this belief, Cage wrote his first percussion ensemble works between the late 1930s and early 1940s, putting himself, historically and intellectually, in line with Edgard Varèse and his composition *Ionisation*. In the 1950s, Cage put forward two ideas that formed his approach to theater: give up control of material as a creator and solicit an active role in the listeners. His approach to theater was fundamentally a philosophical one – if we transform our perspectives by embracing our surroundings and listening to them with a fresh sensibility we elevate everyday chaos onto the platform of theater. Our mundane world could suddenly become theater by the sheer perceptual change in how we sense and engage with the environment. Cage's *4'33"* (1952) is as much a

Example 9.1 *Dressur*, “chair” instructions, mm. 5–8.

4) Stuhl anheben und sogleich auf den Boden fallen lassen
lift chair, and immediately let fall on to the floor

verharren! Hände auf der Stuhllehne lassen
motionless! leave hands on chair back

simile

verharren! Hände auf Stuhllehne
motionless! hands on chair back

fff

f(!)

ANFANGSAUFSTELLUNG/
INITIAL POSITION

▼ = Körper- bzw. Blickrichtung
body or direction of sight

PUBLIKUM
AUDIENCE

Figure 9.1 *Dressur*, opening stage direction.

theatrical work as a musical composition. By allowing ourselves to sit and listen to the sounds of a space and then watch how the people behave and interact with others and with the space, we enter a theatrical temple with our shift in perception. *4'33''* is a musical composition; it has a published score and is performed in three movements. However, the experience of *4'33''* is largely a theatrical one for both the audience and the performer. Cage said, “Where do we go from here? Towards theater. That art more than music resembles nature. We have eyes as well as ears, and it is our business while we are alive to use them.”¹⁰

Kagel’s exploration into theater came shortly after Cage’s. His *instrumental theater* works are built on a different set of principles, full of rigor and systematically researched in all aspects, and no doubt the most influential pieces of his creative output. Kagel composed his music with meticulous precision. He asserted absolute control over musical material and instructions for performing his works. Figure 9.1 is from *Dressur* (1976–1977) composed for *Trio le Cercle*.

This stage diagram shows the opening position of the three players with the specific instruction on the body direction each player should face (indicated with a triangle).

In Example 9.1, Kagel describes exactly when and how to put a chair onto the floor. He asks for the player to first “lift the chair and immediately let fall on to the floor,” and then “motionless! Leave hands on chair back.” The first time is marked *fff* and the second time is marked *f(!)*.

The beginning of the score contains five pages of annotation on the specific instruments used in the piece. At the end of the instrumental annotation, the instruction reads:

Actions

Such musical events as occur within the context of a scenic “plot” require rigour and concentration. One must renounce to every kind of facial expressions and gestures which might be misunderstood as means of putting across a particular “content.”¹¹

At first reading, this instruction seems to go against my argument of using gesture to amplify musical intention. A closer look will give a different reading. Kagel never expected or wanted musicians to become actors. In fact, he discouraged acting in musicians as he felt that musicians are best at playing their instruments. The thought of acting will only distract musicians from playing their instruments. By asking the players to “renounce to every kind of facial expressions and gestures” and keep to the score, Kagel has in fact brilliantly designed a way to amplify his own prescribed gestures and theatrical expressions by discouraging others. By following this action direction, the performers in *Dressur* can naturally amplify all musical gestures in the piece to deliver a successful theatrical performance.

?Corporel (1985) by Vinko Globokar (b. 1934)

?Corporel was written as part of *Laboratorium* (1973–1985), a large collection of solo and chamber works for an ensemble of ten players including two percussionists. In *Laboratorium*, Globokar wrote one piece for ten players, two pieces for nine players, three pieces for eight players, and so on, including two percussion solos: *Toucher* (1973) for Jean-Pierre Drouet and ?Corporel (1985) for Gaston Sylvestre. In *Laboratorium*, Globokar studied and focused on a single issue in each piece, and in ?Corporel, he examined the issue of sound by using the body as the instrument. Original sound sources were mapped out using a male body. Globokar speaks about how he found his sound sources:

I first determined the different ways to produce the sound: finger, fist, flat hand, hitting, caressing, sliding, etc. I then explored the places on the body where to produce the sounds, considering areas where the bones are just under the skin like in the head, or if there are muscles separating bones and skin like in the stomach or thigh. Later, I added vocal sounds with the idea to imitate percussion sounds produced on the body using the voice. Finally I introduced a spoken verse written by the French Poet René Char.¹²

The opening instruction says “in canvas trousers, bare-chested, barefoot. Seated on the ground, facing the audience. Stage lighting. Amplification.”¹³ Although Globokar does not specify exactly how to light the stage, he states that stage lighting will help draw the audience’s attention to amplify the presence of the performing body and, by extension, amplify the physical

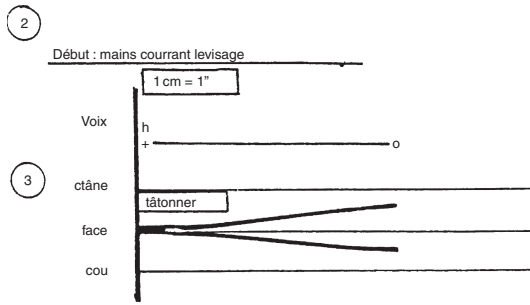


Figure 9.2 ?*Corporel*, opening.

gestures. By the simple lighting request, Globokar changes a concert space into a theater, thereby asking the audience to pay extra attention to the movements and listen with their eyes open. By using amplification, he allows the audience to hear soft sounds presented in this work that can easily disappear in a large space. With these instructions, Globokar contextualizes the body as a musical instrument.

In Figure 9.2, there are four lines in the score: the top line represents the voice; the second line represents the head; the third line represents the face; and the bottom line represents the neck. On the very top, the phrase translates as “beginning, hands cover the face.” In the middle, it says to “grope.” In addition, one centimeter on the page is equal to one second in time on an original size score.

The voice produces the sound “h” from the position of mouth closed (+) to the position of mouth open (o). In the process of producing the sound from a closed position to an open position, there is a natural crescendo that comes with the gradual opening of the mouth. In this case, the mouth acts as an amplifier to project the sound “h” into space. Using the vocal sound as a guide, the hands become the visual representation of the voice in this opening line to “act out” the crescendo with an increasing speed of the gesture. Using the French word *tâtonner* (grope) as the metaphor, the hands can feel the skin on the face as to pull open the mouth to let the sound out.

It is fascinating for a player to discover what sounds a body can make. By combining these sounds into lines and then layering the lines, the player creates polyphony. However, in order to have all sounds heard, I use the strategy of “gesture as volume control” to amplify the perception of sound, and to further create cohesion between movement and voice.

Figure 9.3 uses the actions of scratching and pressing in order to produce two musical lines. The solid line in the shape of a rainbow represents one

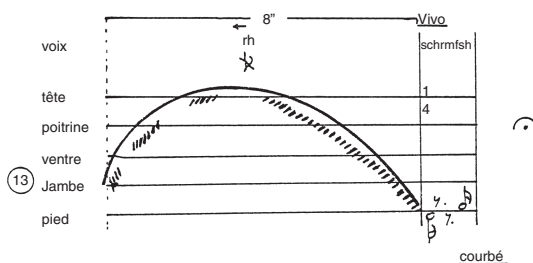


Figure 9.3 ?*Corporel*, m. 13.

hand pressing onto the body while the second line – underneath the solid line and marked with slashes – means to scratch. The notation instructs the player to start at the leg (*jambe*) pressing with one hand while scratching with the other, and continue the motion while going up the torso until reaching the head. When the hands reach the top of the head, say “ah,” and then come down the torso pressing and scratching all the way to the foot. Scratching is a universal human expression; both the performer and audience have the memory of scratching based on past experience. As a performer scratches him/herself in performance, the memory of scratching is triggered in the audience. By using gesture as volume control to amplify the present and trigger the past, the performance of ?*Corporel* becomes an interwoven musical experience between the present (sounds heard in the space) and the past (sound stored in the audience’s memory). It is possible that the listener does not hear the performer scratching his/her skin from the back of the hall. However, when the listener sees the performer scratching, the memory of the sound of scratching is activated in the listener and a musical communication is established.

***Aphasia* (2010) by Mark Applebaum (b. 1967)**

In a more recent work, *Aphasia* by American composer Mark Applebaum, the composer takes the idea of musical gesture to a different level through an ingeniously designed and annotated set of hand gestures to a prerecorded soundtrack. Applebaum originally wrote the piece for baritone Nicholas Isherwood, but the piece has been adopted into the percussion repertoire. Why does the percussionist feel compelled to take on a piece in which no percussive sounds are made and all the player does is to wave his/her hands? It certainly does not require the specific training of a percussionist to execute such a work! It is an increasingly popular piece with percussionists, evidenced by its widespread use by performers on recital

1
4/4 ♩ = 60 4/4 ♩ = 66

0:00 0:01 0:02 0:03

♩ 60 00 ♩ 65 46

1/4 4/4

1|1 2|1 2|2 2|3

Aphasia Mono

[NOTATED RHYTHMS APPROXIMATE TAPE]

(ANTICIPATION)

UCK

CENTURION GREETING

R

L

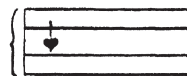
Figure 9.4 *Aphasia*, m. 1.

programs. What is significant about this piece that teaches us about being a percussionist?

Figure 9.4 is an excerpt from the score of *Aphasia* that shows a prerecorded soundtrack with a detailed notation of what is on it and what the performer is supposed to do and when. In fact, learning *Aphasia* is an extension of learning *Corporel*, but in *Aphasia*, the performer is left to interpret the timing delivery of the imaginary sounding gestures, but not the sounds themselves. It is only natural for us to gravitate toward physical gestures as a form of musical communication. Think about how Burritt's legato notes were understood through the gestures. This is why percussionists eagerly adopted *Aphasia* into their repertoire. Each gesture is precisely drawn as a pictogram to mark the arrival timing of a gesture on the score. The performer is seated using the reach of his/her arms to create the illusion of a frame and perform various gestures forming a contemporary *tableau vivant*. While there is tactile information missing in the performance of *Aphasia*, the piece trains the performer to use a similar reflex and apply the rigor of precise timing as if one is performing a multi-percussion solo.



Les Pointes - The Fingertips



Par un mouvement d'élévation du poignet, seule l'extrémité des doigts tendus frappe la surface de la table.

La main en complète extension, en L par rapport à l'avant-bras.

By raising and lowering the wrist, just the fingertips strike the table. The bend at the wrist should make an L with the forearm.

Figure 9.5 *Musique de Table*, instructions.

***Musique de Table* (1987) by Thierry de Mey (b. 1956)**

Thierry de Mey teases out the relationship between gesture and sound through the lens of composer, choreographer, and cinematographer. In his work *Musique de Table*,¹⁴ he choreographed three pairs of hands acting as ballerinas and drummers through sounding movements of dancing, tapping, sliding, and hitting, all performed on three pieces of wood (amplified through contact microphones). The composer asks the performer to be immobile except for his/her hands. Lighting focuses on the hands and excludes the face. The notation is specific in terms of hand movements. In Figure 9.5, de Mey depicts the use of fingertips on the board like *les pointes* – a ballet move with the tip of the toes.

***Les Guetteurs de Sons* (1981) by Georges Aperghis (b. 1945)**

Trio le Cercle premiered *Les Guetteurs de Sons*¹⁵ by Aperghis in Festival de Saint-Denis in 1982.¹⁶ It is performed with specific lighting designs involving three circles – each corresponds to one of the drum pairs and a player. Prior to *Les Guetteurs de Sons*, Aperghis wrote *Le Corps à Corps* for Jean-Pierre Drouet, in which Drouet used traditional Persian *tombak* techniques to create the musical material in the storytelling of a motorcycle race. In *Les Guetteurs de Sons*, Aperghis uses gesture, vocal sounds, and text to construct an abstract narrative of three lives from the stage of infancy through old age. He dissects basic percussion gestures in order to create drama and tension. The basic movement of drumming can be described as the arm moving down toward the skin and moving up away from it. Aperghis divided this movement into two parts: “up” and “down” as two separate musical actions and notated them separated with arrows pointing up and down.

Example 9.2 shows the notation for player one from measure 24 to measure 30. Measure 24 indicates the right arm moving down (with a downward arrow) toward the drumhead on the downbeat and moving up

Example 9.2 *Les Guetteurs de Sons*, mm. 24–30.

(with an upward arrow) on the second thirty-second note with silent strokes (marked with white note heads). Measure 26 shows skillful finger drumming combined with pitch modulation. Pitch modulation on a drum can be produced by applying pressure to the center of the drum or isolating vibration from part of the skin.

Aperghis uses two types of vocal sounds in this work: nonsense syllables and text. There are two goals in the use of the nonsense syllables – first is to imitate the drum sounds and second is to create the player’s own drumming language through each of the three separate and distinctive musical characters that are established. The performers are free to design syllables corresponding to drum notes in certain passages, for example, the vocal line in measure 26 in Example 9.2. The composer does not indicate which syllables to use in this passage; the decisions are left to the performer. Once the syllables are chosen, the relationship between the syllables and notation is fixed with exact correspondence through the piece.

The second type of vocal sound is text. The original text is in French, and understanding the text is important in this work, in particular the phrase, “*Je dirai presque que le bruit est nécessaire parce qu’il évite de trop penser*” (“I would almost say that noise is necessary because it prevents one from thinking too much”). Aperghis has summarized his underlying philosophy toward the work in this phrase. He encourages the translation of the French text into the performer’s native language and/or to the language of the audience. This translation of the text into another language is crucial in forming the interpretation because most performers can produce stronger and more convincing delivery in their native language.

In Example 9.3, four short fragments “*Le silence, J’entends, Le bourdonnement, Il y a, J’ai l’impression de, Je ne sais pas*” (“The silence, I hear, the humming, there is, I have the impression of, I do not know”) are used to create a blanket of textual noise. The text is notated with precise rhythm. By using a language, but not always following its natural syntax and rhythmic flow, Aperghis creates a situation to allow other interpretations

Example 9.3 *Les Guetteurs de Sons*, m. 187.

The musical score for Example 9.3 consists of three vocal parts (1, 2, and 3) and three percussion parts (M.D., M.G., and G.C.). The time signature is 4/8. The lyrics for each part are as follows:

- Part 1:** j'ai l'im-pression il y a le le si - lence le bour-don-ne - ment j'en - tends le bour-don - ne-ment le si-lence
- Part 2:** le si - lence le bour-don-ne-ment j'en-tends le bour-don-ne-ment et le si-lence j'ai l'im-pres-sion il y a le
- Part 3:** j'en-tends le bour-don-ne - ment le si-lence j'ai l'im-pres-sion il y a le le si - lence le si-lence j'entends le si-lence

The percussion parts (M.D., M.G., G.C.) feature rhythmic patterns with dynamic markings such as *ff* (fortissimo).



Figure 9.6 Aiyun Huang in performance.

and experiences using the same set of words. Perhaps, the goal of using text in his music is not all about understanding the text as words! By setting the text in rhythm and using them in fragments, Aperghis abstracted the text by creating a layer of noise and misunderstanding, thus offering us multiple perspectives into the interpretation of the work. By dissecting percussive gesture and combining use of text in nonconventional ways, he created a provoking and abstract narrative to the work.

***Variations sur un texte de Victor Hugo (1991)* by Jean-Pierre Drouet (b. 1935)**

In contrast to Aperghis' abstract approach to theater, Drouet's approach shows a direct and effective combination of drumming, singing, and dancing. *Variations sur un texte de Victor Hugo* was written for Quatuor Hélios, a French percussion group formed by Isabelle Berteletti, Jean-Christophe Feldhandler, Florent Haladjian, and Lê Quan Ninh. The piece is divided into three sections: drums with voice, dance with voice, and finally marimba with voice. Since the piece was a commission, the dance was designed to fit the genders of the group, one female (player one) and three male players.

In this piece, Drouet expresses a critical view of the world through extending the performers' skills to include singing and dancing as well as through the use of instruments, setups, and staging. First, Drouet articulates the dichotomy between the façade that we live in and the reality that we deny. To achieve this dichotomy in the piece, the players use the floor-tom facing the audience (as a façade) and a tray of voice-matching instruments facing the back (as a denied reality). When the performers play the tom-toms, the expressive markings are usually calm and pleasant. On the other hand, the notation for the rear-facing musicians calls upon them to use various noisemakers in imitation of specified voice sounds. These consist of animal sounds – such as a snorting pig, and other nasal, ugly voices (see Example 9.4).

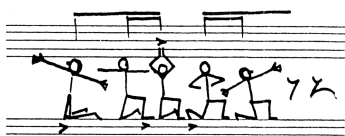
Second, Drouet uses an excerpt from Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables* (1862) to make a comparison between Hugo's time and our time – to

Example 9.4 *Victor Hugo*, animal sounds.

The image shows a musical score for a percussion ensemble. It consists of a single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The notation includes rhythmic symbols such as 'PFFF', 'HRRR', and 'PFFF' with dynamic markings like 'F' and 'P'. There are also notes on the staff, some with stems and flags. To the right of the staff, there are several lines of text representing animal sounds and vocalizations, including 'SSS i u i u i u', 'Huuuuuu', 'Pou! Pou! Pou! Ho', 'Frrr', 'ou! ou! ou!', 'ou! Hu', 'Prrrrrr', 'Nouuuu', 'Pli', 'SSSRRRRR', 'CHL', 'Trrrrrr', 'Hrrrr', 'P Prrrrr', 'P Prrr', and 'RRRRR-A', 'Hu', 'PF', 'Prrrr', 'PFFF', 'ou', 'ou', 'ou', 'PFFF', 'ou'.

Example 9.5 Victor Hugo, text.

Example 9.6 Victor Hugo, dance movements.



demonstrate that Hugo's predictions about the future did not come true (see Example 9.5). In *Les Misérables*, Hugo expressed his expectations that in the twentieth century people would live in an ideal society where there would be no fear. It is clear that we still struggle with some of the same issues in different manifestations from Hugo's time.

Third, Drouet uses dance to express the peak of his frustration with the world (see Example 9.6). During the press conference for the performance of *Variations sur un texte de Victor Hugo* on March 18, 1998, in Taipei, a reporter asked Drouet "why is there dance in the piece?" Drouet replied by relating his feelings that he could no longer express what he wanted to say through music and text; therefore, dance was a natural choice of expressive medium for the climax of the piece. The dance in this piece is very percussive, employing techniques derived from tap-dance and flamenco. The extended skills in this work require the players to step outside of their usual roles in order to successfully perform their tasks. Some dance and voice coaching is recommended in order to play the piece with conviction.

Conclusion

In *Dressur*, the performers are encouraged to renounce all extra gestures in order to highlight the ones indicated in the score. *Corporel* uses gesture to amplify sound as a visual volume control to form a coherent musical interpretation between sound and movement while in *Aphasia*, gestures are used to create visual tableaux with precise timing similar to performing multi-percussion. In *Musique de table*, the hands are the ballerina-drummer performing a compositional choreography. In *Les Guetteurs de Sons*, three musical characters are formed through the dissection and expansion on percussive gesture, voice, and text. The percussionists in

Variations sur un texte de Victor Hugo are asked to become singers and dancers in addition to playing percussion in order to fully express the musical intention of the composer. All the works presented in this chapter have fully notated musical scores sharing the following: first, the score gives stage directions; second, the score asks for stage lighting; and third, the notation is very specific to include not only pitch and rhythm, but also a set of instructions in order to perform the exact actions through space in time. All the compositions ask the performers to empower their theatrical potential through the embracing of their performing bodies. They demonstrate that the percussionist can approach theater through the simple shift in perception as Cage has suggested, through leveraging the impact of performance gestures so that they become more readable, through understanding how to use the voice as an extension of the performing body, and finally through the learning of other skills that allow the player to step into roles other than traditional percussion performance.

Notes

1. F. J. Oteri, "Steven Schick: Ready for Anything" (April 1, 2004) (www.newmusicbox.org).
2. M. Rebstock and D. Roesner (eds.), *Composed Theatre: Aesthetics, Practices, Processes* (University of Chicago Press, 2012), p. 9.
3. M. Nusseck and M. M. Wanderley, "Music and Motion – How Music-related Ancillary Body Movements Contribute to the Experience of Music," *Music Perception*, vol. 26, no. 4 (2009), 335–53.
4. C. Palmer, "Music Performance: Movement and Coordination," in Diana Deutsch (ed.), *The Psychology of Music*, 3rd ed. (Amsterdam: Elsevier Press, 2013), pp. 405–22.
5. For woodwind, brass, and string instruments, long notes are generally produced through continuous movement of breath or bowing. For percussion, long notes are produced either through roll (combining many short tones together to create the illusion of long tone), pedal (vibraphone), or gesture.
6. M. Schutz and S. Lipscomb, "Hearing Gestures, Seeing Music: Vision Influences Perceived Tone Duration," *Perception*, 36 (2007), 888–97. For more detailed information, see Michael Schutz's article, "Lessons from the laboratory," Chapter 20.
7. B. W. Vines, C. L. Krumhansl, M. M. Wanderley, I. M. Dalca, and D. J. Levitin, "Music to My Eyes: Cross-modal Interactions in the Perception of Emotions in Musical Performance," *Cognition*, 118 (2011), 157–70.
8. J. Cage, *Silence* (Wesleyan University Press, 2010), pp. 3–6.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 12.
11. M. Kagel, *Dressur* (Frankfurt: Henry Litolf's Verlag/C.F. Peters, 1983).
12. F. V. Kumor, *Interpreting the Relationship Between Movement and Music in Selected Twentieth Century Percussion Music*, unpublished DMA thesis, Kentucky (2002), p. 49.
13. V. Globokar, *?Corporel* (New York: C. F. Peters, 1989).
14. T. de Mey, *Musique de Table* (Tienen, Belgium: PM Europe Publications, 1987).
15. Drouet plays part one, Coquillat part two, and Sylvestre part three.
16. The score of *Les Guetteurs de Sons* was published by Edition Salabert, but the score is currently out of print. A PDF copy is available for download from the composer's website (<http://aperghis.com>).