

No Cure: Curating Musical Practices



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Curating Resonances through Creating Relationships

Irena Müller-Brozović

Curating has undergone a relational turn. From putting different artworks in a relationship, curating today consists of creating a large network of relations. But what is the nature of these relations, how can curators create good relations, and what role does music play within these networks?

These are questions that are familiar to me as I address them as part of my *Musikvermittlung*¹ practice and research. Musikvermittlung and curating music are related practices, and they share similar goals, as they aim at creating, deepening, and expanding musical relationships. In my dissertation,² I investigated how musicians can foster musical relationships. In this paper, I place my research in the context of curating studies and propose a model for curating concerts and music projects. In the first section, I explain the concept of Musikvermittlung and clarify my understanding of music before discussing the relational turn in curating studies. The second section examines the nature of resonant musical relationships and addresses their preconditions based on Hartmut Rosa's³ resonance theory. In the third section, I illustrate my thoughts with a concrete example of a concert performance and finally show how resonance theory can be applied to the practice of curating with a dynamic model. My contribution is intended to encourage curators to reflect on their own practice and to take up suggestions for practice.

Musikvermittlung and Curating Music: Two Sister Disciplines

Musikvermittlung and Curating Music are sister disciplines. As Chaker and Petri-Preis put it, "Central concerns of Musikvermittlung include bringing people into contact with one another by means of music, and getting them involved in shared discussions and interaction with, through and around music, in short: to instigate social communication and entice them towards new kinds of music experience."⁴ Musikvermittlung is understood as an artistic practice⁵ and as a field of action with multifaceted interfaces, among others with dramaturgy and journalism.⁶ Musikvermittlung always has a social reference and is articulated in performative, participative, installative, transdisciplinary, intermedial, and communicative formats, both within institutions and the independent scene. As a collaborative practice, Musikvermittlung works with people from very different contexts. A key principle of Musikvermittlung is the change of perspective. This creates a diversity of perspectives on music and many ways of listening. Even if demanded again and again (especially to justify subsidies), Musikvermittlung does *not* pursue the goal of educating about musical taste, generating an audience of tomorrow, and thus legitimizing the supremacy of Western classical music, but it wants to enable "personal, socially significant aesthetic experiences with music."⁷

This requires an examination of the existing tradition. In this respect, Musikvermittlung exercises an affirmative function: it deals with given practices, performance methods, and existing norms and structures. At the same time, however, Musikvermittlung changes all these specifications and therefore has a transformative function, too. This requires critical self-reflection and discourse with the artistic and strategic leadership of music ensembles and institutions.⁸ An example of the transformative function of Musikvermittlung is the change that the Beethovenfest in Bonn is undergoing. For

artistic director Steven Walter, Musikvermittlung does not count as a by-product, but is part of the main artistic program. He understands Musikvermittlung as a cross-sectional task of the entire festival.⁹

As an interface practice, the action field of Musikvermittlung can be characterized as a messy place. In the resonance-oriented Musikvermittlung described here, the focus is on cultivating a network of relationships rather than on gaining attention and interpretive authority (*Deutungshoheit*) which is fought out in an arena, a place of combat. The place of resonance-oriented Musikvermittlung, on the other hand, resembles a forum.¹⁰ Such a forum originally arose in Rome in a marshy area, where in the course of the centuries very different public buildings were (re-)built in a very confined space. The forum as a messy place is used in very different ways: it is a place of exchange, trading, pleasure, politics, contemplation, reflection, development, and transformation.

Music as a Relationship Builder

In such a forum, music itself is considered an actor and relational facilitator (*Beziehungsstifterin*). According to Georgina Born's Mediation Theory,¹¹ music creates diverse forms of relations: a) among musicians, b) within communities through musical or other identifications, c) in wider collectives, and d) in institutions on which their (re) production and transformation are founded. According to Georgina Born's Mediation Theory, music is a mutual interaction: it changes and shapes subjects and socialities, but music itself is also formed by human practice, discourse, groups, and socio-technical arrangements. Born conceives music as "an aggregation of sonic, social, corporeal, discursive, visual, technological and temporal mediations—a musical assemblage, where this is understood as a characteristic constellation of such heterogeneous mediations. In Deleuzian thought an assemblage is defined as a multiplicity made up of heterogeneous components, each having a certain autonomy [...]."¹² In concert situations, therefore, a network of relationships is woven. Its quality, according to Christopher Small, can only be evaluated situationally and subjectively by the involved participants: "Any performance, [...] should be judged finally on its success in bringing into existence for as long as it lasts a set of relationships that those taking part feel to be ideal and in enabling those taking part to explore, affirm, and celebrate those relationships. Only those taking part will know for sure what is their nature."¹³

The resonance-oriented Musikvermittlung described here, though, is not about merely affirming certain (supposed) performance traditions; its focus is on exploration. Accordingly, Daniel Leech-Wilkinson asks: "What is our problem with innovation, or even imagination, in musical performance? Why are we so horrified at giving classical music the same licence we give classical theatre? [...] Perhaps because we practise classical music as Utopia, a perfect society, walled off from the rest of the world, which it would be unforgivable to disrupt."¹⁴ It is precisely such a disruption that Leech-Wilkinson calls for: a move away from "Doing History in Sound" towards an artistic and creative independence of musicians that does not please the gatekeepers and the "performance police" but corresponds to a "radical performance" that will "turn concert life into something less competitive, less predictable and less routine."¹⁵

Within the musical network of relationships, it is not a matter of preserving and representing certain traditional values, but rather a personal and creative approach to music in which music is contextualized with very different social perspectives. From this emerges an individual meaningfulness of music. This practice of mediating corresponds to Brandon Farnsworth's view "that curating is connotated with a renewed emphasis on the relationship between contemporary music and society, and a break in

some form with the status quo.”¹⁶ Thus, Musikvermittlung and curating music also have in common that they both see themselves as rebellious practices. Accordingly, a performance is not a representation of works, but a co-construction of the participants.¹⁷ This requires a mediation process, as Farnsworth points out: “The concept of mediation is key in that it describes the process of providing context and framing, connecting an artistic practice with particular histories, audiences, and places. The transdisciplinary and transculturality that define 21st century artistic practice require this explicit constitution of connections in order to not be lost in the deluge (of information, of ideas, of entertainment).”¹⁸ Within this network-based approach, the curator has the role of a mediator¹⁹ who considers personality a key factor, because it is not only about working as efficiently as possible, but about an affective performative practice.²⁰ At the same time, the mediation and inclusion of different perspectives demand ethical curatorial responsibility.²¹ With the relational turn of curating music, its similarity to resonance-affine Musikvermittlung intensifies. Both disciplines need an open, discrimination-sensitive attitude, build networks, give impulses, but also take up ideas and concerns of the partners.

Curating as Relationship Work (*Beziehungsarbeit*)

Now that I have outlined the similarities between curating music and Musikvermittlung, I will take an in-depth look into the relational turn in the field of curating, referring to Beatrice von Bismarck²² who emphasizes and concretizes the relational turn of curating studies. By “curatoriality,” she refers to the “relational dynamics of the curatorial.”²³ The curatorial makes art and culture public and is based on a “web of relationships among all human and non-human participants” where the relationships are both aesthetic and emotionally affective.²⁴ Changes occur through dynamic relationships and new linkages.²⁵ The analysis of the curatorial situation as a structure of relationships makes it possible to examine and reshape “traditional hierarchies, fixations, dependencies, privileges and ways of acting.”²⁶ The claim for a transformation towards practices and structures that are critical of power and sensitive to justice also shows the proximity of curatoriality to Musikvermittlung and follows demands of cultural policy and cultural management.²⁷ However, the question arises whether these concerns are not utopian in light of reality. Do von Bismarck’s claims remain wishful thinking, or do practical examples exist in the art field in which curatoriality is implemented as institutional critical practice (like the mentioned transformation at Beethovenfest in Bonn)?

The essence of the curatorial is characterized by three aspects: first, transpositional processes, from which, second, certain situational and temporary constellations emerge, and, third, the *dispositif* of hospitality on which transposition and the constellation are based.²⁸ Transposition means movements, displacements, and entanglements of human and non-human actors.²⁹ Through these practices, dynamics and contrary orientations emerge, for example, gathering inwardly and showing outwardly (in public). When the transpositions take an open-ended course and unexpected encounters arise, new relationships emerge.³⁰ Through transpositions, however, previous relationships can be separated or exclusions can take place.³¹ Von Bismarck calls the dynamic network of relations a constellation.³² Each constellation is characterized by “aesthetic, social, political and economic lines of force [*Kraftlinien*].”³³ Hospitality therefore corresponds to a field of tension between reception and exclusion. This contrast already lies in the range of meanings of the Latin verb *curare*, which on the one hand means to protect, respect, and support, but on the other hand also includes to determine and control.³⁴ The hosts determine who is allowed to be a guest under which conditions (which in turn has to do with attributions of identities and status), who receives which

resources, how roles and their functions are defined, and how spaces are used.³⁵ Sometimes, being a host is also about improving one's own status.³⁶ The curatorial therefore needs an ethos, which von Bismarck understands as a dynamic principle: "The curatorial is not to be understood as an ethical application, but rather as a situational, transformative ethos. In curatorial hospitality lies the potential of a mutual becoming-hospitality [*ein gegenseitiges Sich-Zu-Gast-Werden*]."³⁷ Who is a guest with whom in which role? These questions are decided temporarily in the respective situation. Von Bismarck therefore speaks of a "threshold situation that, due to specific freedoms, allows the roles and functions of hosting and being hosted to change continuously."³⁸ These negotiation processes are a matter of power. Von Bismarck therefore describes the curatorial situation as an arena in which a struggle for attention is fought.³⁹ Crucial to the curatorial, according to von Bismarck, is not winning this battle, but the dynamics of negotiation, what she calls "interplay in the curatorial."⁴⁰ Thus, the curatorial, with its relational dynamics, undergoes a change of perspective, because the focus is no longer on specific aspects (such as exhibits or presentation formats) or individuals (such as artists or curators), but on the relationships between the various (non-)human participants.⁴¹

At this point, it should be remembered that when the battle in the arena of the curatorial is about attention, privileged individuals and institutions have a great advantage. Other individuals, on the other hand, are not noticed at all. They are silent actors who are forgotten in the loud struggle for attention. When von Bismarck uses the image of the arena only as a metaphor, she removes the tension from the negotiation process. The struggles are named, but to a certain extent they show themselves to be appropriate to the situation and are therefore downplayed. One way to escape this approach would be to use the arena not as a mere metaphor but as a method.⁴² In this way, the struggle for attention could be critically investigated, and silent actors and blind spots within the curatorial could be uncovered.

Resonance as a Successful Mode of Relationship

Before this article illustrates the theoretical thoughts on a curatorial practice with a practical example from music, the next step is to show how the nature of relationships is ideally shaped. Such an ideal case happens only rarely and cannot be conjured up. But in the description of ideal, resonant relationships, certain aspects emerge that can be fostered. Knowing these aspects leads to a resonance-oriented practice of curating music. This is the purpose of the following theoretical deepening. It gives an answer to the question: How can relationships in the curatorial be made as successful as possible? To answer this question, I refer to sociologist Hartmut Rosa's theory of resonance (2016, 2018a, 2018b).⁴³ Before I discuss his resonance theory, I point out that, for Rosa, music reveals a certain world relationship and a specific mood. Music, for him, negotiates various relational qualities.⁴⁴ According to Rosa, instrumental music resembles an "experimental field for the appropriation of different patterns of world-relationship."⁴⁵ Music thus offers us humans a playing field for entering into different relational constellations and trying ourselves out in them. For Rosa, however, music is also a "*stubborn material*" because it can never be "completely controlled, calculated, and predicted," otherwise it becomes "pure routine" or there is a danger of manipulation.⁴⁶ In addition, music has high social relevance. Rosa even finds that without music, society would have collapsed long ago.^{47 48}

Resonance in the sense of sociologist Hartmut Rosa⁴⁹ is not to be understood as a resonating feeling, attention, recognition, approval, or harmony, but as a mode of relationship: resonant relationships are reciprocal, vibrating, successful relationships. They are

responsive relationships (*Antwortbeziehungen*), a living dialogue of different voices with an open outcome. The designation of this mode of relationship with the term resonance is problematic, because it is neither the physical phenomenon nor a metaphor of resonance. Rather, resonance for Rosa means a risky interaction process with an open-ended transformation where all participants change. Moreover, when it comes to music and art, resonant relationships produce an aesthetic surplus that implies a non-understanding. Resonance shows up in concerts as “dynamic, processual events. [...] Resonant relationships are established when *the spark is ignited*, when a collective resonance develops between the artists on the one hand and between the artists and the audience on the other. [...] In such an experience, a form of self-efficacy can certainly be experienced [also for the audience], because here *it works* at least within the recipient. Often these two forms of collective resonance develop a reciprocal contagious effect: resonance between the artists is transferred to the audience and vice versa.”⁵⁰

Defining Characteristics of Resonant Relationships

At the beginning of resonant relationships, there is an interaction between an affection and a response in the form of self-efficacy. Affection corresponds to being gripped and touched, which is connected with the belief that one’s own enthusiasm and passion is connected with something important and that one can affect others with it. Affection, then, involves not only enthusiasm but also an inner conviction. Musicians, curators, and mediators not only feel like putting on a concert, but they consider their activity to be something urgent, necessary, important. Resonant relationships are therefore based on sensuality⁵¹ on the one hand and meaningfulness on the other.⁵²

The person addressed is not only touched by fascination, or affected as Rosa says, but also wants to bring about something in him- or herself. The affected person is triggered, so to speak, and develops an expectation of self-efficacy. This means that he or she has the desire and confidence to take on challenges and assume responsibility. Self-efficacy, too, is associated with intrinsic interest. The affected person acts out of his or her own motivation and classifies his or her actions as important. Sensuality and meaningfulness therefore also play an important role here. Intrinsic interest does not increase with personal “success or the ‘reward’ for a commitment, but with the experience of being able to *bring about something oneself*; to achieve the world. It is not the effected *results* that are decisive, but the *experience of the interaction* that results in the process.”⁵³ So it’s not about being successful on your own, but rather about the quality of the interaction. A resonant relationship corresponds to a living dialogue. To conceive resonance not as a mere metaphor but as a mode of relationship, in addition to the first two criteria of resonant relationships, namely 1) affection and 2) self-efficacy, there is also a need for 3) transformation and 4) uncontrollability.⁵⁴

Transformation corresponds to a temporary or even lasting change: this can be a change of mood, a feeling of aliveness, a changed situation, or even a key biographical experience. Transformation cannot be planned, controlled, enhanced, or captured, nor can it be disposed of. Since resonant relationships are interactions, the transformation affects all those involved. However, for transformation to occur, resonance as a responsive relationship needs a different voice. This different voice results in an irritation and thus a dynamic in the relationship structure. Resonance is not a tune-in or an echo but depends on a certain dissonance to trigger a transformation. Therefore, dissonance is not the opposite of resonance but a constitutive element of it.⁵⁵ Because of this mixture, resonance-oriented Musikvermittlung overcomes dualistic thinking in dichotomies and locates itself in an intersection of diverging aspects.

In the interaction with another, the independent voice involves uncontrollability, which is a prerequisite for resonant relationships because “we can only get into resonance with something or someone out there that is insurmountably different from us and non-controllable. Therefore, it is not about the ‘nostrification’ of another, and not about the reinforcement or affirmation of one’s identity, but about its transformation.”⁵⁶ Any transformation needs a certain irritation, therefore “resonance contains and, at least at times, requires contradiction, friction, disagreement [...]”⁵⁷ That is why resonance means neither consonance nor harmony. Through an encounter with something that is different, an unexpected transformation might occur and lead to an experience of strong resonance.^{58 59} In the realm of music, this means that a strong, lively response relationship to a hitherto unknown or unappreciated music arises, even against the previous habitus and field.⁶⁰ Transformation involves overcoming given opinions and practices. Rosa emphasizes that, “Violating the meaning of one’s interpretive horizon can clearly constitute a major experience of resonance! More than this, I claim that an element of transgression of this horizon is necessary for resonance to happen. Resonance is the result of an encounter with something that is not (entirely) captured by my standard interpretive frames.”⁶¹ As far as interpretive frames are concerned, resonance is “not a culturally specific, acquired aesthetic sensibility, but the most basic, constitutive and essential form of human self-world relations.”⁶²

However, resonance is uncontrollable.⁶³ The transformation might happen or not. If it occurs, it happens in an unexpected way, for the nature of the transformation is unpredictable and open ended. Being affected and experiencing resonance always involve a risk and a vulnerability. Therefore, “there is also a danger in transformation: resonance is never free of risk.”⁶⁴ This also applies to the establishment or possible failure of resonant relationships: if nothing comes back from fascination and affection, the relationship is indifferent, or even repulsive. Hartmut Rosa calls the state of relationshiplessness alienation.

Rosa underlines that resonant relationships are connected to power, and therefore an ethics of resonance is needed. In his words:

This is an ethics that tries to let the other be, to preserve its voice, but nevertheless seeks to reach out and touch it and let it transform itself: The resonant subject does not try to transform the other, but it might try to open routes for self-transformation for the other. In this sense, the autonomy of the other is always respected: It is a consequence of accepted inaccessibility. I believe this sense of care for the other even extends beyond subjects: When we are in resonance with nature, or a piece of art, for example, we try to preserve it carefully [...].⁶⁵

Resonance as a responsive relationship also implies a responsive empathy and responsibility. Rosa creates a neologism for this: “I owe him or her responsibility: I let myself be touched and transformed by the voice, perhaps the cry of the other.”⁶⁶ In other words, an “ethics of resonance requires listening to the other, not telling him or her what to do.”⁶⁷

Preconditions for Resonant Relationships

What conditions resonant relationships need can be explained with four mixing ratios: first, as already described, there is a need for simultaneous meaningfulness and sensuality. This can be illustrated by the example of a resonating body: the body of a violin not only has the function of producing a sound (thus it exhibits meaningfulness), but it

also contributes to the quality of the sound (thus it also provides sensuality). Resonant relationships are meaningful and sensual. They are characterized by high relevance and at the same time joyful aesthetic experiences. Second, like a resonant body, resonant relationships need simultaneous openness and closedness. Openness implies an inner vulnerability. Therefore, a resonant relationship needs social recognition and appreciation and, besides openness and empathy, also a certain closedness, which is expressed in self-confidence and in an expectation of self-efficacy.⁶⁸ For with too much openness, one's own voice is lost, and there is the danger of an echo or even of manipulation. Too much closedness, on the other hand, prevents one from engaging with the other person, with the context, and with the unforeseen. So, on the one hand, empathy for the new is needed, and on the other hand, an agile, dynamic stability. The mixture of simultaneous openness and closedness is what I call medioordination. An example of medioordination in the realm of curating music is when the musicians and the audience can be flexible with a given space or clear time constraint.⁶⁹ A third prerequisite for resonance is an attitude of mediopassivity, which could just as well be called medioactivity.⁷⁰ This refers to a form of acting in the in-between of passivity and activity, a simultaneous listening and responding. Chamber music making or improvising occurs mediopassively. A fourth mixed relationship, I call medioconjunctivity. For resonance is based on relationships that are binding and yet loose. At the intersection of these four mixing ratios, there is a great potential for resonant relationships.

Rosa distinguishes a total of four dimensions of resonant relationships: horizontal for social relationships, diagonal for intense relationships with objects and work, vertical for existential relationships with nature, history, religion, or art,⁷¹ and additionally a self-relationship.⁷²

Based on Hartmut Rosa's understanding of resonance, which cannot be planned but only fostered, I speak of a resonance-oriented Musikvermittlung and of curating *possible* resonances. I call the four mentioned dimensions of resonant relationships in the realm of music resonant (1) relationships *with* music, (2) relationships *to* music, (3) relationships *in* music, and (4) self-relationships *through* music. If a relationship succeeds, however, exclusions in the form of indifference or alienation always take place at the same time. Resonance-oriented Musikvermittlung and curating possible resonant relationships therefore require an awareness of diversity, hierarchies and agency, an openness to different, individual spheres of resonance, as well as a sensitivity to discrimination and the handling of human and non-human resources.

Different Resonant Relationships in a Performance

I will now describe in a concrete example how the four dimensions of resonant relationships can occur in a performance. In order to be resonant, these relationships need the defining characteristics mentioned above, namely, an affection, self-efficacy, uncontrollability, and transformation. The example can also be used to show the basic principles of resonance (cf. the four mixing ratios and the other aspects described above). However, the described performance is by no means a prime example of resonance; rather, a great deal of alienation was also observable. But this is exactly what makes the example interesting. The description serves to concretize resonance theory and shows its relation to curating music.

The performance *Überläufer** on the subject of migration was conceived and performed by students of the Basel Hochschule für Musik together with students of scenography at the FHNW Hochschule für Gestaltung und Kunst under the direction of composer Hannes Seidl. The students developed the piece in a process that spanned

several months. Some found it difficult that the process remained open for so long and that Hannes Seidl did not simply make decisions and issue instructions (so there were obviously different expectations regarding openness and closedness). Through the collaborative development of the piece and the execution of their own dramaturgical ideas, the students engaged with the music in an intense way; they experienced self-efficacy and developed relationships *to* music.⁷³

The concerts took place in a former customs hall as part of the ZeitRäume Basel 2019 festival.⁷⁴ Outside the hall, every audience member was welcomed by a student and was ceremoniously dressed in a transparent, shiny cape. This preparation gave the event a meaningfulness and sensuality and raised expectations for the performance. When the doors of the hall were opened, the audience was immersed in the ongoing performance that spanned the entire hall. There were many sounds and places to discover, fostering simultaneous affectation and self-efficacy. The cape was also worn by the performers who moved through the hall and didn't play all the time. Therefore, it was not visually clear who was performing and who was listening (cf. mediopassivity). The musicians and scenographers were oriented to a fixed time schedule, but they also had free spaces that they could shape individually (cf. medioordination). Sometimes they strolled individually through the hall, sometimes they met for group actions, and sometimes they had solo performances (cf. medioconjunctivity). In the concert, not only did the musicians perform, but so did the scenography students, e.g., with smartphones. The two groups of students were connected through the social interaction with music, they were in a relationship *with* music.

The customs hall was divided into changing transit spaces by students moving huge transparent mobile walls. The audience thus experienced a constantly changing space and sound, freely choosing their way through the hall, but sometimes also being pushed in one direction (cf. medioordination). There was no stage nor recognizable spatial separation of performers and audience; everyone was on the move, voluntarily or involuntarily making intermediate stops and encountering each other (cf. medioconjunctivity). Thus, the dynamic space also generated social interactions. This shows that other non-human actors, such as space, equipment, and staging, were also involved and created or prevented relationships. On a balcony outside the hall, audience members were invited by a computer to answer questions about migration and their own biography. The answers were filmed and streamed shortly afterwards in the concert. Individual audience members thus became performers; they participated and became part of the performance in a personal way (cf. self-efficacy). For the makers of the performance, this audience action also meant a risk. It was not clear whether the audience would get involved and what contributions would come (cf. uncontrollability). The actively involved audience members positioned themselves in the computer-filmed interview on the concert's theme, migration, and established a relationship *to* music. But even those who were involved only as listeners were able to experience a relationship *to* music if they were willing to engage with the music in an exploratory way and put different musical aspects into context.

Due to the continuously changing setting, all participants were in motion and met each other. Through these social interactions with music, everybody experienced relationships *with* music. The scenographic and performative staging of the performance's theme, migration, contributed to the fact that the participating students and the audience also experienced the music in an existential and performative way. The participants, if they were open to it, could build a relationship *in* music—for example, in a cabin furnished with large cushions and bright lights, where electronic music was

played very loudly. Furthermore, during the performance, musicians and audience members experienced themselves in a different way than in everyday life. They experienced a special self-relation *through* music in the concert setting.

As the piece was about migration, the students generated inclusions and exclusions that were not objectively comprehensible and revealed an arbitrariness and injustice. In order to concretize exclusions, the audience was shifted with huge transparent mobile walls, and a gatekeeper let some people into a cabin or onto a viewing platform, but others were denied access for no reason. All participants therefore also experienced exclusion and alienation and were sensitized to discrimination processes. During the performance, space and sound transformed in many ways. What form of transformation the participating students and the audience also experienced internally could not be observed from the outside. The individual experiences would have to be brought to light with interviews.

Dynamic Model for Curating Resonances

In my dissertation, I developed a dynamic model for resonance-oriented Musikvermittlung in the form of a turntable that could also be used for curating potential resonances.⁷⁵

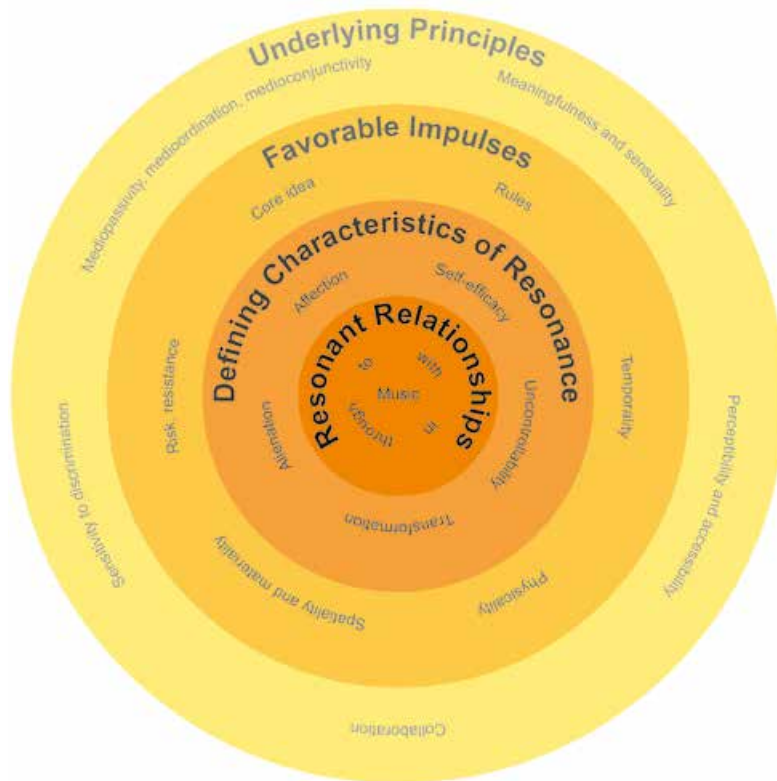


fig. 1 Turntable of resonance-oriented Musikvermittlung and curating music (Müller-Brozović, forthcoming).

In addition to the defining characteristics of resonance mentioned above (affection, self-efficacy, transformation, uncontrollability, potential alienation), the four dimensions of resonant relationships (relationship *with* music, *to* music, *in* music, and *through* music) and the underlying principles (including meaningfulness and sensuality, mediocoordination, mediopassivity, medioconjunctivity, sensitivity to discrimination, perceptibility, accessibility, and collaboration), the model also identifies favorable impulses for curating music. Here, an existing core idea, its rules of play, and the handling

of temporality, physicality, spatiality, materiality, and risk are addressed. For each of the twenty aspects in total, curators can formulate questions with which they can conceive, discuss, and reflect on their projects.⁷⁶

In order to spin the turntable as a tool for curating music, I refer once again to the described example and bring into play guiding questions for some aspects of the favorable impulses that support curators in their work. To curate music with the help of the turntable, one selects a certain aspect, e.g., the core idea, turns the individual discs, and brings the selected aspect into relation with other aspects. In this way, the core idea can be further developed and questioned in relation to all the defining characteristics of resonance,⁷⁷ the four possible resonant relations,⁷⁸ and the mixed forms of mediopassivity, medioordination, and medioconjunctivity⁷⁹. In the example above, I have already described the artistic means with which the questions about these aspects may be answered.

Regarding the favorable impulses for resonant relationships mentioned on the turntable, curators may address the following questions, among others, concerning the core idea: What artistic intention and social urgency does the core idea contain? What is at stake? With these questions, the core concept gains dynamism and the turntable starts spinning. By answering, the curators' artistic idea becomes connected to a social context and acquires relevance and urgency. The curator becomes aware of what the core of the artistic idea is, what negotiation processes are occurring, and what risks are consciously taken. In the example mentioned above, these questions are answered as follows:

Borders are fictitious—regardless of whether they are the borders between countries or continents, between ethnic groups or between classes: they only come into being in a language that strives for order and division. In the project *Überläufer**, the ideas of students from the fields of music and scenography on the themes of migration and change come together in an unusual sound-space composition. Based on the remarkable cultural diversity of the students in Basel, several months of joint development resulted in a space and music that are in constant flux – a kind of organism in constant motion, a marketplace full of people with the most diverse connections.⁸⁰

If the core idea on the turntable is now placed in relation to, for example, the aspect of discrimination sensitivity (one of the founding principles), the core idea can be questioned on the following points, among others: How can the responsible individuals distance themselves from their own wishes and intentions and include other perspectives? In the case of *Überläufer**, this was done during the development process as part of the collaboration with the very different students (diversity in terms of age, origin, field of study, musical preferences), and during the performance through audience participation via the described audience interview on the subject of migration. However, if one reflects on the artistic idea of *Überläufer** not only in terms of content, but also in its implementation with regard to possible discrimination, it becomes apparent that access to the customs hall is not barrier-free, and people with a walking disability cannot participate (to mention just one possible kind of discrimination).

The core idea can also be questioned in terms of its rules, e.g., with the following questions: How do the rules create clarity and trust? How do the rules allow for creativity, openness, and flexibility? How do the rules encourage encounters and exchange? To what extent is the approach resource-oriented? In the performance *Überläufer**, there

was a clear time frame with a precisely defined entrance, a predetermined duration, and a clear time for leaving the room. The musicians followed a strict timeline and time brackets for certain actions. Other actions, however, did not follow any time constraints. This mixture had a clearly structured and yet open effect on the performers and the audience. As the spaces in the hall constantly changed and closed again and again in different formations, encounters with different people were created. In the collaboration between the students of music and scenography, they were able to contribute their potential,⁸¹ and the audience was able to participate with their own statements, if they wished.

Another favorable aspect for resonance concerns physicality. In this regard, curators may ask themselves questions such as: Are bodies perceived not only as a performing medium, but also in their sensuality and statement? At *Überläufer**, the glittering transparent capes worn by both musicians and audience transformed the bodies into flowing magnets that attracted, grouped, or repelled and isolated themselves. The bodies formed proximity or confinement. Musicians and audience members on a platform looking down on the action in the hall were exposed on the one hand, but also had an overview and control of the people on the other. Entering the wooden hut, the audience landed in a bright white cloud with huge cushions on which they listened to very loud music while lying down. They not only perceived music in a different bodily position, but they were also exposed to extreme sensory stimuli. The audience and the musicians exposed themselves to an extreme physical situation, which at the same time took place in a protected and exclusive setting, as a doorman granted entry only to selected people for no reason. From this situation of exclusivity, experienced exclusions and an endurance test of sensual perceptions, an individual meaning, perhaps also a non-understanding, emerged for each participant. Not only the audience, but also the musicians, changed positions. Some of them traveled as a swarm while playing with their cell phones; others gave a concert in an open freight car converted into a stage, while one musician on the platform screamed full of anger into a megaphone, and another was invisible, purring the song "Strangers in the Night."

In a similar way, the curators can take up further aspects on the turntable and develop their core idea towards resonant relationships. For relationships to be truly resonant, the defining characteristics of resonance must all be present. The four dimensions of resonant relationships (with/to/in/through music) can occur singly or in combinations, and the underlying principles and facilitating impulses may have an influence. With my model, I specify the nature of musical relationships and their influencing aspects and thus contribute to a reflective practice of curating resonances. My theoretical foundation of a relational approach in curatorial studies supports the practice of curators on the one hand and on the other hand offers a starting point for future empirical research. This paper aims to show that curating resonances as a network practice is a dynamic open process, an art of balancing, and a venture in which, in the best case, vivid interactions occur in a network of relationships, transforming all involved.

Notes

- 1** *Musikvermittlung* is a very broad term that has no equivalent in English. Musikvermittlung does not only mean outreach projects, audience development or music education, but, as an artistic practice, realizes cultural participation and social cohesion, which comprises two of three main funding axes of Swiss cultural funding. Following Chaker and Petri-Preis (Sarah Chaker and Axel Petri-Preis, eds., *Tuning up! The Innovative Potential of Musikvermittlung* (Bielefeld: transcript, 2022)), the term Musikvermittlung will be used in German in this paper.
- 2** Irena Müller-Brozović, *Das Konzert als Resonanzraum. Resonanzaffine Musikvermittlung durch intensives Erleben und Involviertsein* (Bielefeld: transcript, forthcoming).
- 3** Hartmut Rosa, *Resonanz. Eine Soziologie der Weltbeziehung* (Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2016).
- 4** Chaker and Petri-Preis, *Tuning up!*
- 5** Matthias Rebstock, "Strategien zur Produktion von Präsenz, II," in *Das Konzert II. Beiträge zum Forschungsfeld der Concert Studies*, ed. Martin Tröndle (Bielefeld: transcript, 2018), 159; Barbara Balba Weber, *Entfesselte Klassik. Grenzen öffnen mit künstlerischer Musikvermittlung* (Bern: Stämpfli Verlag, 2018).
- 6** Irena Müller-Brozović, "Musikvermittlung," accessed September 6, 2021, <https://www.kubi-online.de/artikel/musikvermittlung>.
- 7** Wolfgang Rüdiger, "Zum Begriff Musikvermittlung und zu den Beiträgen dieses Bandes," in *Musikvermittlung - wozu? Umriss und Perspektiven eines jungen Arbeitsfeldes*, ed. Wolfgang Rüdiger (Mainz: Schott, 2014). (English translation by the author.)
- 8** Carmen Mörsch, *Zeit für Vermittlung*, ed. Institute for Art Education der Zürcher Hochschule der Künste im Auftrag von Pro Helvetia, 2013, als Resultat der Begleitforschung des "Programms Kulturvermittlung" (2009 – 2012), accessed August 11, 2022, https://www.kultur-vermittlung.ch/zeit-fuer-vermittlung/download/pdf-d/ZfV_0_gesamte_Publikation.pdf.
- 9** Steven Walter, "Was bedeutet Musikvermittlung?," Podcasts Beethovenfest, audio, June 26, 2022, <https://www.beethovenfest.de/de/magazin/sonderfolge-musikvermittlung/9>.
- 10** Irena Müller-Brozović "Von der Arena zum Forum. Unterschiedliche Spielformen in Musikvermittlungsprojekten," in *Zusammenspiel? Musikprojekte an der Schnittstelle von Kultur- und Bildungseinrichtungen*, ed. Johannes Voit, Diskussion Musikpädagogik. Sonderheft (Hamburg: Hildegard-Junker, 2018), 30–47.
- 11** Georgina Born, "Mediation Theory," in *The Routledge Reader on the Sociology of Music*, eds. John Shepherd and Kyle Devine (New York: Routledge, 2015), 360.
- 12** *Ibid.*, 359–360.
- 13** Christopher Small, *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening* (Hanover, N.H.: Wesleyan University Press, 1998), 49.
- 14** Daniel Leech-Wilkinson, "Classical Music as Enforced Utopia," *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education* 15, nos. 3-4 (2016): 329, accessed September 6, 2021, <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1474022216647706>.
- 15** Daniel Leech-Wilkinson, *Challenging Performance: The Book* (2020), accessed July 17, 2020, <https://challengingperformance.com/the-book/>.
- 16** Brandon Farnsworth, *Curating Contemporary Music Festivals* (Bielefeld: transcript, 2020), 19.
- 17** *Ibid.*, 103.
- 18** *Ibid.*, 281–282.
- 19** *Ibid.*, 105.
- 20** *Ibid.*, 89.
- 21** *Ibid.*, 30–31.
- 22** Beatrice von Bismarck, *Das Kuratorische* (Leipzig: Spector, 2021).

- 23** Ibid., 11. (English translation by the author.)
- 24** Ibid., 13;19. (English translation by the author.)
- 25** Ibid., 15.
- 26** Ibid., 43. (English translation by the author.)
- 27** Philippe Bischof, “Transformieren statt transformiert werden: Chancen für den Kultursektor,” Kulturpolitische Gesellschaft e.v., accessed August 9, 2022, <https://kupoge.de/blog/2021/01/29/transformieren-statt-transformiert-werden-chancen-fuer-den-kultursektor/>.
- 28** Bismarck, *Das Kuratorische*, 93.
- 29** Ibid., 153; 155.
- 30** Ibid., 157.
- 31** Ibid., 159.
- 32** Ibid., 87.
- 33** Ibid., 187. (English translation by the author.)
- 34** Ibid., 205–207.
- 35** Ibid., 201.
- 36** Ibid., 211.
- 37** Ibid., 215. (English translation by the author.)
- 38** Ibid., 221. (English translation by the author.)
- 39** Ibid., 67; 75–77.
- 40** Ibid., 15.
- 41** Ibid., 15–17.
- 42** A research method to analyze a situation as an arena is described by Clarke, Friese, and Washburn, *Situational Analysis: Grounded Theory After the Interpretative Turn* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2018).
- 43** Rosa, *Resonanz*; Hartmut Rosa, *Unverfügbarkeit* (Vienna, Salzburg: Residenz, 2018); Hartmut Rosa, “The Idea of Resonance as a Sociological Concept,” *Global Dialogue. Magazine of the International Sociological Association* 8, no. 2 (2018), accessed July 14, 2022, <https://globaldialogue.isa-sociology.org/articles/the-idea-of-resonance-as-a-sociological-concept>.
- 44** Rosa, *Resonanz*, 161–163.
- 45** Ibid., 483. (English translation by the author.)
- 46** Ibid., 396. (English translation by the author.)
- 47** Hartmut Rosa, “Musik als zentrale Resonanzsphäre,” Vortrag am Kongress des Verbands deutscher Musikschulen, 2019, accessed September 6, 2021, https://www.musikschulen.de/medien/doks/mk19/dokumentation/plenum-1_rosa.pdf.
- 48** Rosa often uses music in his resonance theory to illustrate his thoughts. However, in my opinion, his musical examples are unfortunate (a resonating tuning fork lacks resistance, there is no independent voice nor an uncontrollability—all constitutive elements of resonance). Rosa’s musical examples seem to correspond to his personal musical preferences and, in my opinion, are rather an expression of emotion (*Rührung*) and affirmation, but not resonant relationships.
- 49** Rosa, *Resonanz*.
- 50** Ibid., 491. (English translation by the author.)
- 51** With sensuality, I relate to the gratification of the senses, the desire or the indulgence, but not in a sexual way. See <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/sensuality>, accessed December 19, 2022.
- 52** Rosa, *Resonanz*, 463.
- 53** Ibid., 274 (English translation by the author.)
- 54** Hartmut Rosa, “Beethoven, the Sailor, the Boy and the Nazi: A reply to my critics,” *Journal of Political Power* 13, no. 3 (2020): 397–414. Accessed July 23, 2022, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/2158379X.2020.1831057>.

55 Ibid., 398.

56 Ibid., 399.

57 Ibid.

58 Ibid.

59 The interaction with a different voice and uncontrollability also ensure that resonance corresponds neither to an echo nor to a manipulation.

60 Rosa, "Beethoven," 399–400.

61 Ibid., 400.

62 Ibid., 406.

63 Rosa differentiates uncontrollability and emphasizes that resonance needs a semi-uncontrollability. Resonant relationships need perceptibility and accessibility to emerge. Rosa, *Unverfügbarkeit*.

64 Andreas Reckwitz, Hartmut Rosa, *Spätmoderne in der Krise. Was leistet die Gesellschaftstheorie?* (Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2021), 246. (English translation by the author.)

65 Rosa, "Beethoven," 410.

66 Ibid., 411.

67 Ibid.

68 Rosa, *Resonanz*, 298.

69 A flexibility in terms of space and time is by no means a "recipe" for resonance, because resonance cannot be planned with individual "ingredients." Therefore, resonant relationships also occur in a traditional concert.

70 Hartmut Rosa, "Spirituelle Abhängigkeitserklärung. Die Idee des Mediopassiv als Ausgangspunkt einer radikalen Transformation," in *Große Transformation? Zur Zukunft moderner Gesellschaften*, eds. Klaus Dörre, Hartmut Rosa, Karina Becker, Sophie Bose, and Benjamin Seyd (Wiesbaden: Springer, 2019), 35–55.

71 Rosa, *Resonanz*, 331.

72 Rosa, "Musik als zentrale Resonanzsphäre."

73 However, according to their professor, some of the scenography students could not develop a relationship to the music. They did not experience any affection, and the music remained alien to them.

74 The trailer of *Ueberläufer** can be seen on <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S-JL-GF2xEQ0>, accessed July 15, 2022.

75 Irena Müller-Brozović, *Das Konzert als Resonanzraum. Resonanzaffine Musikvermittlung durch intensives Erleben und Involviertsein* (Bielefeld: transcript, forthcoming).

76 My own guiding questions will be published in the context of my dissertation (Müller-Brozović, forthcoming).

77 For example, with the questions: How do we show our enthusiasm for the music, the people, and the situation, and do we let them inspire us? How do we give the audience a space for interaction? How do we relate to the unexpected? How can we contribute to an openness and liveliness of the situation? Where and to what extent do echo chambers and exclusions exist in the situation?

78 For example, with the questions: How do we and audience members engage with the making and context of the music? Do we communicate and interact with music? In what way do audience members experience the music in an immersive way? How do they engage with themselves through the music and gain new ideas?

79 For example, with the questions: How clear and yet flexible is the conception, how binding and yet open? How can we create situations in which all the participants listen to each other and interact?

80 Hannes Seidl, "Überläufer**", accessed August 26, 2022, <http://www.hannesseidl.de/pieces/uberlaufer/>. (English translation by the author.)

81 The scenographers made a huge effort. Large steel frames, covered with a huge transparent shimmering foil, were made, as well as walkable wooden constructions,

which had to meet very high requirements both acoustically and statically. The commitment of the scenographers bordered on excessive demands, which also contains a potential for conflict.

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