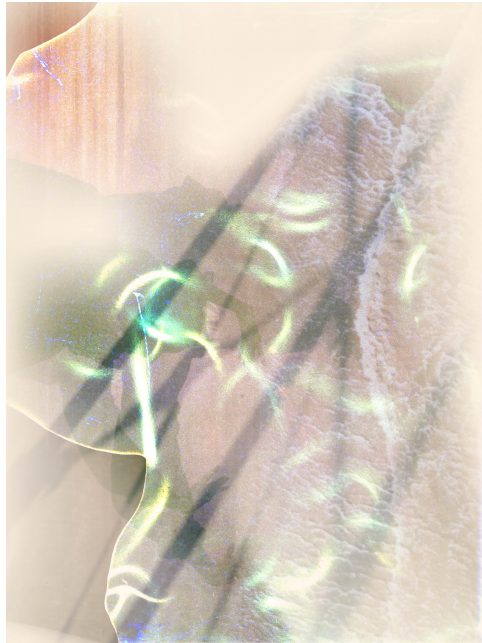


Open Time



"Music with no counts, or open time, is most often called ambient."

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Now, just as some folks would have found the counting section of this work challenging, there will definitely be some folks that find moving without counts just as challenging...if not more so. There is a big insecurity or instability that folks who count movement feel when there are no any counts. It is so important to continue to stress that this is normal and not a good or bad thing...just something to notice as an individual. Actually practicing movement without counting will add so much ease and flow when you get back to counted movement. The reverse is true as well

Many other factors contribute to movement when there is no pulse, tempo, or meter. The sound of the instruments used (timbre), volume, layers and sound design are employed to create an environment for the movement to live in. Music with no counts, or open time, is most often called ambient. The genre ambient can include new age, sound design, low-fi, drone music, movie soundtracks, and many others. People might think of ambient as meaning soft or quiet, which is definitely not true for all music without counts. Noise music, created with lots of distortion and feedback, can be incredibly abrasive and rarely has counts.

Moments in dance for music with no counts:

Beginning of class

End of class or a cool down

Slow center combinations

Plies

Gaga Technique

Improvisation Classes

Choreography

Keeping a space or section of choreography alive and moving with intensity when the music has no counts is not easy. The advancement of laptops makes things much easier, mainly because of the amount of diverse layers you can easily maintain. Volume has a big part to do with how the environment feels in open time, but layers are the single strongest tool for adding intensity and motivation to the space. With the laptop, I can create layers upon layers of my trumpet. This combined with sound design is extremely powerful to carry a class to a very large and expansive environment all the way to a quiet simple, single layer to bring the focus directly into the space.

Music Practice

How do folks use ambient music in their choreography and teaching? What are other places where music with no counts is used? Does anyone have a preference for music with counts or music with no counts? Find a few diverse sounding pieces of music to improvise with as a group. Then ask each student to switch into headphones and create a short teachable phrase with a piece of music they find with no counts.