The Truth – In Music
The Sound Of Différance

Resnica – v glasbi
Zvok différance

**Keywords:** Truth, Music, Sound, Différance, Destinnerance, Résonance, Para-cite, Play, Graft, Song, Space-Between, Listen, Hear

**Abstract**

This essay (trial, effort, test, attempt) through (on: the way we say that something runs on such and such an energy source) the truth in music has been written to be read as heard. To re-call the experience of the irreducible sonority of truth (in) music (in) words of which it speaks, and the play of différance – the threads of silence that run between (the) sounds that language/music/truth is mixed together with – that makes sens(e). Composed as a series of grafts (para-cites) on to the writing of Jacques Derrida, the paper engages what it proposes, enacts what it tells: the deconstruction always already at work in a work (his work, this work, any work): the equivocal destinerrance of truth (in) music (in) words.

*Ce qui reste à force de musique.* Niti poezija niti proza. Niti filozofija niti pesem. Nekaj iz prostora vmes.

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The essay is a critical examination of the concept of différance as it is applied to music, focusing on the irreducible sonority of truth within musical discourse. It explores how the deconstruction of traditional notions of music and truth is achieved through the play of silence and sound, using Jacques Derrida's philosophical framework to analyze the interplay between words and musical experience.

**Ključne Besede:** resnica, glasba, zvok, différance, destinerrance, résonance, paracitat, igra, cepič, pesem, medprostor, poslušanje, slišanje

**POVZETEK**

Članek (poskus, prizadevanje, preizkus, prizadevanje) skozi (na: poti, za katero pravimo, da na njej poteka določen vir energije) resnico v glasbi je napisan, da bi se bral in poslušal. Da bi se pri-klicala izkušnja ireduktibilne zvočnosti resnice (iz) glasbe (prek) besed, ki govorijo o njej, in igra diférance – niti tišine, ki se pletejo med zvoki, s katerimi je jezik/glasba/resnica prepletena –, ki prinaša smisel (čutnega). Komponiran kot niz -cepičev- (paracitatov) pisanj Jacquesa Derridaja, članek uporablja to, kar predlaga, ponazarja to, o čemer govori: dekonstrukcijo, ki je vselej prisotna v delu (v njegovem delu, v tem delu, v katerem koli delu): dvoumen destinerrance resnice (iz) glasbe (prek) besed.

*Ce qui reste à force de musique.* Niti poezija niti proza. Niti filozofija niti pesem. Nekaj iz prostora vmes.
I

I owe you the truth
In painting
And I will tell it to you

Cézanne wrote
In a letter
To Émile Bernard
Strange utterance
Derrida writes
I recite
(Para-cite)

The speaker is a painter

He is speaking
Or rather
Writing

For this is a letter

He is writing
In a language
Which shows nothing

Causes
Nothing
To be seen

Describes
Nothing

Represents
Even less

What must truth be
To be owed
(Due)

Even rendered
(Rendue)

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In Painting
That is
What interests me

This interest
When I am interested

In the idiom
Of truth

In Painting

Which promises
A truth

Which is (not)
Always already there

In Painting

This revenue
Of
Surplus value

Irreducible

To the semantic
Content
Of its representation

Indeed
To the representable

Untranslatable
In its economic performance

Undecidable
In Its equivocal destinerrance

(Derrida writes)
I recite

This idiom
Of truth
In Painting

**But**
That's what
An idiom is
It does not
Merely
Fix
The economic
Propriety of a focus
But
Regulates
The possibility
Of
Play
Of
Divergencies
Of
The equivocal
A whole economy
Precisely
Of
The trait
This economy
Parasitizes
Itself
Hear
Here on
Off the page
What must truth be
To be owed
Due
Even
Rendered
Rendue
In
Music

In
Painting 3

In
Words

On
Off the page

That is
What interests
Me

This revenue
Of surplus value

This
Interest

When
I am interested

In
The idiom of truth

In
Music

Which promises
A truth

In
Writing

In
Words

Which is (not)
Always already
There

In
Music

121
Ce qui reste
À force
De musique

What Must
Truth
Be

In order
To be owed
Due

Even
Rendered
Rendue

In
Music

I cannot
Precisely
Have it

At my
Disposal

Or
In my
Control

I listen to it

It is
The experience
Itself

Of
Impossible appropriation

The most joyous
And
The most tragic

(Derrida writes)
I recite
It may give rise
To
Calculation

Representation
Tabulation
Imitation
Regulation

Notation

Con-scription
Pre-scription
In-scription

De-scription

But
In the final analysis
It ceases to be
Calculable

_Ce qui reste_
À force
_De musique_

Beyond
The order of the calculus
Itself

Beyond
The incalculable
As a still possible calculus

Forever
Unable to saturate
A context

What reading writing
Speaking citing
Re-citing

Will ever make it heard

This idiom
Of truth
In music

In a word

The reader too
Must
Improvise

Take breath
And read with the ears

hör dich ein
mit dem Mund

Hear deep in
With the mouth

Listen
With limbs and lips
And throat and tongue

Absorb
Its movement
With larynx and lungs

What underlying scansion
Of the world
Does it embody

This idiom
Of
Truth

Which is (not)
Always already there

In music

In words

Irreducible
To the semantic content
Of its representation

Indeed
To the representable
Untranslatable
In its economic performance

Undecidable
In its equivocal
*Destinerrance*

The stereographic activity
Of an entirely other ear

An entirely other echo
Echo echo echo
Sphere

*Ce qui reste à force de musique*

Hear
Here on
Off the page

**Only the song remains**
It is reborn
Each time

Nothing
Can be done against it

Never
Will any letter
Ever

Make it heard
In a word

Here
Hear on
Off the page

Nevertheless

At this very moment
In this work
Here I am

*Me*
*Voici*
I follow
Je suis

Under assignation

To make
It heard

To tell the truth

In music

In words

I owe you the truth in music

And I will tell it to you

As it is tol(le)d
In music

Le son
Résonant

Quelle
Chanson

Like the sound of the sea
Deep within a shell

The essential thing
Is to set the song in motion
As a graft

[Shoot or scion
Inserted in a slit of another stock
From which it receives sap
[Piece of transplanted living tissue]
Process of grafting
Place where the graft is inserted
Hard work]

And not
As a meaning
A work
Or a spectacle

126
This economy parasitizes itself

Each grafted text
[Piece of transplanted living tissue]
Continues to radiate back
Toward the site of its removal

Transforming that too
As it affects the new territory 21

We must begin
Wherever
We are

Wherever
We are in a text

Wherever
We already believe ourselves
To be 22

Fidelity
Requires that one quote

In the desire
To let the other speak

And

Fidelity
Requires that
One not just quote 23

To grasp a meaning
That does not come through understanding 24

But through
Rhythm resonance
Repetition rhyme
Timing timbre
Tone

*Ce qui reste*
*A force*
*De musique*

Undecidable

127
In its equivocal destinerrance

What reading
Writing speaking
Reciting citing
In-citing
Will ever
Make it
Heard

In a word

The silent play of
_Différence_

The s-p-l-a-c-e of
_Resonance_

Undecidable

Between

The sedimented _sens_
Of
Sound

The sedimented sound
Of
_Sens_

Singing
Ringing
Off on the page

**The most difficult thing**

Is the invention
Of the tone

And with the tone
Of the scene
That can be staged

The pose that adopts you
As much as you adopt it

128
Hear
Here on
Off the page

The tone being precisely
That which establishes
The relation

It isn't the content
It's the tone 27

Everything is summoned
From an intonation

And even earlier still
In what gives its tone
To the tone

A rhythm

I think
That all in all

(Derrida writes)
I paracite

It is upon
Rhythm

That I stake
Everything

It therefore begins
Before beginning

That is
The incalculable origin

Of
A rhythm 28

II

I owe you the truth
In music
And I will tell it to you

As it is tol(le)d
In music

En passant
Résonant

In the space between

One thing and another

Speech
(And)
Writing

Poetry
(And)
Song

Sens
(et)
Sons

Undecidable

Between

Le nom/non du père
The discourse of the father

And the lalalangue
Of the mother tongue

The truth
in music

Comes
To
Pass

As music
Comes
To
Pass

130
Always already
Past
Passed
Through

The desire of the (m)Other

Trace effect(s)
Of
The in(ter)vention

Of
The Other

Which must be re-enacted

Repetitioned
Repeated
And
Rehearsed

To be
Enjoyed enjoined

Or
Real-ized

At all
As
Music

As
Truth

In
Music

**Event**

Of the space
Between

One and Other

Of the space
Between
Things
That Sound Re-sound

Only when they move
A-part Together

When they are moved
Together A-part

Event Of the space Between
Sounds

The threads Of silence
That run Between The sounds

That music is Mixed Together with 30

The silent Play Of différance

That sustains Maintains Retains Sound

As Music

The truth Of Différence

In Music

132
G. FINN • THE TRUTH – IN MUSIC THE SOUND OF DIFFÉRANCE

All round
From outside

All round
From a centre

Somewhere
Near
Here
And there

Music tells
The truth
About
Truth

Which comes
And goes

Which comes
To pass

Which comes
Always
Already pas(t)sed

Through

The play
Of
Différence

Undecidable
In its equivocal *destinerrance*

Between

A passion
That moves

And

The mobilizing action
Of one body on another

Between

Choice chance
And
Necessity

133
What reading
Writing speaking
Singing citing
Reciting
Inciting

Will ever
Make it
Heard

The truth
That music tells
The truth

About

In a word

Repeated
And
Rehearsed

Repetitioned
And
Recalled

To be
Enjoined

Enjoyed
Or
Real-ized

At all

Only the song
Remains

It is reborn
Each time

Nothing
Can be done
Against it

Ce qui reste
À force

De musique
Between

Speech
And
Writing

And
Beyond
The tranquil familiarity

Which links us
To one and the other

Occasionally reassuring us
In our illusion
That they are two

Music
Takes its toll

Engages
The play of *differance*

The truth of truth
In
The space between

And
Turns it

Into
Sound

Phenomena
Experience
Event

Something
We hear

Something
We apprehend

Something
To which
We can attend

135
Le son
Du sens

Les sens
Du son
Résonant

With in as our bodies
Our selves

Ce
Qui reste
À force de musique

Making space

Giving place
To (a) truth

To which
We cannot not
Respond

One way or another

Like the sound of the sea deep within a shell

That is not
Any sort of present being

That has neither
Essence nor existence

That does not exist

The truth
Of
Music

The truth
Of
Truth

The truth
Of
Différence

What
G. FINN • THE TRUTH – IN MUSIC THE SOUND OF DIFFÉRANCE

Reading writing
Singing speaking citing
Inciting
Reciting

Will ever
Make it
Heard

Ce qui reste
À force
De musique

In a word

This is not a game

In which
Mastery is acquired

Though some do strive
To make it so

And this we can hear

In (the) music

Even where it strives to deny it

The truth
Of différance

The différance
Of truth

And where true the effort to deny it

In (the) music

As
A work

Which comes
And goes

Which comes
To pass

137
Which comes
To be

Always already
Pas(t)sed

Which has to be
Repeated
And
Rehearsed

Repetitioned
And
Recalled

In order to be
(Music)
At all

**The truth**
In
Music

The truth
Of *différance*

Cannot be
Fixed

In a permanent present
Or

Confined
To a single moment

Meaning
Origin
Articulation
Event
Agent
End

Though some contrive
To make it so

And this too can be heard
In (the) music
The *différence*
   Of
Truth

The truth
   Of
*Différence*

And
Where true
The effort to conceal it

To reveal it

As
The essence
   Or
Existence

   Of
Some fixed and present being

   Soul
   Spirit
   Satan
   Nature
   God

   Truth
   Of
The Human Condition

**Toujours déjà**
Il y a là

*Déconstruction*
*A l'oeuvre*

And this can be heard in (the) music

In the space
   Between
One and Other

That sounds
Re-sounds
With in as our bodies our selves

Bending our bodies
Lending our bodies

To the truth
Of its becoming

As
Music

Rhythm resonance
Repetition rhyme
Timing timbre
Tone

The tone being precisely that
Which establishes
The relation

I am complicit

Implicated
Imbricated

In the ethics
Of this musical engagement

Strategic and adventurous

Of the play
Of d\`{e}ference

In one direction
(Sens)
Or another

An ethical appeal
To which
I cannot not respond

One way or another

By resistance
Denial
Or consent

140
I am solicited by (the) music

Whether I acknowledge it
Or not

I am
Embrangled
In response-ability
In (as) my body
(Myself)

In the politics
Of its very possibility
As music

To which I cannot not respond

The institutions
Which name frame
Contain restrain maintain
And tame

What is
To be

The sound(s)
(Of truth)

In music

When I consent
To the music

I consent
To the politics
Of the institutions
That let it be
Music

One way or another

Whether I acknowledge it or not

All this
Can be heard
In (the) music

Even where it strives to deny it

To celebrate a universal singular
necessary objective
and final
truth
(for example)

One
that does not
come
to pass

But is
(posited as)

Here
to stay

Named and contained
within the silence
of its musical frame

For
the work

Of producing truth
in music

Remains
ce qui reste

As the work
itself

Which cannot not be heard

The (hypostasized) one

universal
final
truth
in
music

Cannot be

142
Without
This work

Of producing
Truth

In
Music

This work
Of music

The work of truth

Cannot not be heard
In music

Which is always already
Experienced

Irreducibly

As
Work

By those
Who make it happen

Everything
Is at stake
In music

Epistemology
Ontology
Politics
Ethics
Aesthetics
Kinaesthetics

The truth of truth
The truth of differance
The differance of truth

We should not be surprised
Therefore

At the passion
With which
It is
Contested
Resisted
Defended
Denounced
Practiced
Pursued
Performed

For music
Is always more
Than what it signifies

Giving place to a truth which it does not because it cannot master
(Name tame frame or contain)

The truth
Of truth

The truth
Of différence

Ce qui reste
À force
De musique

Never will any letter ever make it heard

**Only the song remains**

It is reborn each time

Like the sound of the sea deep within a shell

I listen to it

I cannot precisely have it at my disposal

Or in my control

It is the experience itself of impossible appropriation

The most joyous

And the most tragic
So let’s listen

Yes

Let’s listen 38

Notes

8. Cf. Derrida 1979: 76-77: “Forever unable to saturate a context, what reading will ever master this ‘on’ of ‘living on?’”
11. “Hear deep in with the mouth”. Concluding lines of Paul Celan, ‘The shofar place’ (Die Posaunenstelle) in Celan 2000: 360-361.
15. For a more detailed elaboration of the spirituality, politics, and ethics of the space-between see my Finn 1996.
16. “The French solliciter, as the English solicit, derives from an Old Latin expression meaning to shake the whole, to make something trem­ble in its entirety.” Translator’s note (18) in Derrida 1982a: 16.

Literature


