Resonance and/as Responsibility
(How are We to Hear this Sounding?)

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Preface

This text was composed for oral presentation: written by ear to be (read as) heard. It stages an experiment (“expérience”) with sound, and, as a written text, with the sight of sound on/off the page in order to at once solicit and perform the relationship between resonance and responsibility it seeks to explicate and expose. It begins therefore with a listening exercise consisting of the first 33 seconds of a popular song, which is not identified in the text in order to preserve the integrity of the experience (experiment) upon which the success of the paper depends. It is important therefore that you read the text aloud and listen to the accompanying sound recording only as and when instructed to do so, letting the rhythm and sonority of the first and subsequent listening examples, and the spacing of the words on the page, set the pace and tone of your own—resonant and response-able—reading. The sound recording is not an optional extra: it is not included as an example you can listen to at any time but is absolutely integral to the composition (the “sens,” i.e., the meaning and direction) of the written text. So please do not cheat! Read the text aloud and listen to the sound recording only as and when instructed to do so at sections 1, 7, and 11. Source material and scholarly references are provided in the endnotes, which should not be consulted until after your first uninterrupted reading of the paper. Thank you!
Resonance and/as Responsibility  
(How are We to Hear this Sounding?)

1. Please listen [click here]

2. How are we to hear

this sounding
of the knell

giving a sign
of the giving
of signs

without benefit
of clergy

3. Let us stay

with the resonances
of this first hearing

in order to get closer
to this essence
of the event

entendre
entre

comme laisser
résonner

plus que
raissoner

understanding
hearing (entendre)
by resonance

rather than
by reason
in order to
be more
response-able

4. **A response-ability**

or a decision
cannot be
founded

or justified
by any knowledge
as such

without a leap
between two
discontinuous

and radically
heterogenous
orders\(^5\)

silence
and
sound

*rupture*
*e(s)t*
*retournement*

such unpredictability
is precisely

what constitutes
the condition
for ethical engagement

and undecidability
as to if and how
to respond
is the condition
for making a
responsible decision

5. Let us not therefore

abandon this
first hearing

let us listen
from further away

in order to try
to be more
responsible

for our reason
as well as
for our heritage

and to try to
attune ourselves
to them

in a more
responsible
manner

6. How then

are we
to hear

this sounding
of the knell

which speaks
in the mode
of calling

giving a sign
of the giving
of signs
let’s listen again

in order to try to be

more response-able to its call

7. *Please listen* [click here]

8. **Everything is summoned**

from an intonation and even earlier still

from what gives its tone to the tone

a rhythm\(^9\)

listening we surmise that not musical meaning but human breathing

brought music into the world\(^10\)

in – halation ex – halation

in – spiration ex – spiration

re – spiration

the archē is always a return
everything begins
by sending back\textsuperscript{11}
rhythm resonance reverberation
music says we directly regardless of intention\textsuperscript{12}
no man is an island entire of itself
every man is a piece of the continent of the main\textsuperscript{13}
at once unique and in relation\textsuperscript{14}
always already in vibration with an other therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls it tolls for thee\textsuperscript{15}
9. **It calls**

to you
and me
to come
à venir

come listen
come hear
here
hear

the call
of the other
is a call to come

à-venir

to the future
to come

and that happens
only in multiple voices\(^\text{16}\)

undecidable
between

one
and
other

an inheritance
is never
gathered together

is never
one
with itself

its presumed unity
if there is one

can consist only
in the injunction
to reaffirm
by choosing

the injunction itself—

it always says
choose and decide

from among
what you inherit—

can only be one
by dividing itself

tearing
it self
a part
dif-fering
de-ferring
it-self

by speaking
at the same time

several times
and in
several voices

10. I do not

write about
these voices

I try to let them
take over

and keep
speech
through me

I try
to let them
speak
the music
of voices

if there is any
I do not sign it

I cannot
precisely
have it

at my disposal
or in my control

if there is
any music

first of all
I listen to it

it is the experience itself
of impossible appropriation

the most joyous
and the most tragic

so let’s listen

let’s listen

11. Please listen [click here, play Track 1 (purchase required)]

12. Listening we are

the ideal
mother

mother as
(an) idea(l)

attending to
the baby’s cry
alert to
its puling inscriptions

and

we are
the baby

listening to
the mother

for signs

of affection
and attention

for reciprocity
for world¹⁹

undecidable

between one
and other

between call
and response

separation from
and attachment

to the
mother

mama –
don’t go

daddy –
come home

the voice
(of the)
music
the music
(of the)
voice
cuts
both
ways
as authority
_over_ the other
and as exposure
_to_ the other
a present
(_présence_)
constituted as
a between
symbolic gesture
and
primal scream
neither one
and other

rupture e(s)t retournement
séparation e(s)t rencontre
résonance e(s)t réponse

invocation
reciprocation
solicitation

the _zwischen_
reconstituted

in each fresh
meeting

and therefore
always novel
always
calling

for a
fresh
response\textsuperscript{21}

one that
follows

not
by logic

but by
affinity\textsuperscript{22}

affect
and
\textit{résonance}

\textbf{13. \textbf{Listening we surmise}}

that not
musical
meaning

but
human
breathing

brought music
into the world

in – halation
ex – halation

in – spiration
ex – spiration

re – spiration

the rhythm tone
of flesh and blood
and breath and bone
existence hangs

on a push of the lungs

which is at the same time an in–vocation of the other 23 testimony (to) of response ability of (to) approach to (from) the other

entrepr tos

la voix s’inscrit
dans la rupture ombilicale

l’ombilic e(s)t clôture

l’oreille e(s)t ouverture

music says we directly

resonance and/as response
14. **Mother**

you – me
I – you

I – you
you – me
I – you

father

you – me
I – you

I – you
you – me
I – you

children

you – I
I – I
I – you

15. **This is not a game**

through which
mastery
is acquired

trajectory
not entity

seems to make
the self

Freud’s grandchild
keeps the self
going

through
the repetition
of throwing
the cotton reel out
to an extreme

and hauling
it back

fort – da

gone – away
here – to stay

[all my troubles
seem so far away
oh I believe
in yesterday]

rupture
e(s)t
retournement

ouverture
répétition
écart

qui fonde
le discours
du sujet

16. Music re-turns us

to the
primal scene

of loss
and
resolution

re – calls
re – members

re – peats
re – plays
re – presents
re – pairs

the sonorous
unseen
in between

of becoming

one self
and as (for)
an other

as resonance
and response
(ability)

to the call
of the (m)other

a presence
constituted
as a between

music comes
and goes

music comes
to pass

music comes
as always
already passed

the moment
it is produced

fort-da

it comes from the other
and it is addressed
to the other
it begins from the other
and it goes back
to the other 28

double
entendre
entre

raison e(s)t résonance
silence and sound

one and other

17.  We must stay

within the difficulty
of this passage 29

undecidable
between

what is
and

what is
not

to be
or not
to be

imaginary
real
symbolic

one
and
other

the lalalangue
of the mother
tongue 30
sonorous
unseen

and the discourse
of the father

neither one
and other

nor
therefore
avoid

the order of
the disorder

produced
within it\(^{31}\)

here
there

hear
where

*le son*
*leçon*
*du son*

the sound
of sound

on the
threshold
of sens(e)

that cannot
be anticipated
calculated

scripted
or scored
18.  

\textit{Ajouis-sens(e)}\textsuperscript{32} 

of résonance 

that requires 
a different kind 
of listening 

\textit{corps-à-corps} 

double 
\textit{entendre} 
\textit{entre} 

limbs lungs 
lips larynx 
teeth tongues 

throat 
belly 
chest 

and a corresponding 
suspension of concepts 

of categories and rules 
of reason and right 

to rid ourselves 
of the habit 

of always 
hearing 

what we 
already 
understand\textsuperscript{33} 

to undergo 
the experience 
of sound
without the mythology of a system

to give sound a chance

son chance
sens chance

chance son
chanson

to give sound the time it needs
to speak

19. A kin-aesthetic ethic

of resonance and as response ability

of affect and attention

to the sonorous presemantic libidinal

materiality maternity
materiality of sens(e)35

the sense of becoming

the becoming of sense
in the alternating rhythm

of the saying

and the said

of the said

and the unsaid\(^{36}\)

to allow to pass

into writing

what has until now been proscribed\(^{37}\)

as the agency and effect of femininity —

the originary \textit{mousikē}

of language and thought —

the braided polyphony coiled up in every voice\(^{38}\)

undecidable between

one and other
rhythm and tone
of flesh and blood
and breath and bone

the very song
that since Plato

metaphysics has
sought to repress

the history
the mystery
and the now

resonance and
response-ability

*corps-à-corps*

a presence (present)
constituted as
a between

20. **This is not a game**

through which
mastery
is acquired

writing it
at first
is difficult

putting the
mind on it

takes the
ear off it

it is the experience
itself of impossible
appropriation
the most joyous
and the most
tragic
response-ability
without
finality
without
end
so let’s listen
yes
let’s
listen

Notes

1 “How are we to hear this.” Para-cited from Jacques Derrida, Rogues, 136.
6 “Such unpredictability … decision.” Para-cited from Amit Pinchevski, By Way of Interruption, 10.


For “uniqueness and relation” with reference to voice see Adriana Cavarero, *For More Than One Voice*, pp 16, 17, 198 and passim.


“The first obvious quality of the voice is that it fades away the moment it is produced. Verba volent, scripta manent.” Mladen Dolar, *A Voice and Nothing More*, 59.


30 “*Lalangue* is something that one sucks, it is the maternal part of language that undergoes *jouissance*. *Lalangue* remains intimately linked to the body, and is thus eminently charged with meaning, full of meaning,” Juan-David Nasio, *Five Lessons on the Psychoanalytic Theory of Jacques Lacan*, 5.


Works Cited


