

## Flow: A Fourth Musical Element

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**Abstract :** Music is typically defined as having the attributes of melody, harmony, and rhythm. In this paper, a fourth element is proposed - "flow". "Flow" is a new dimension in music that has always been present but only recently identified and measured. The Adagio "Flow Machine" enables us to envision this component and even suggests a new approach to music theory and analysis. The Adagio was created specifically to measure the underlying "flow" in music. The Adagio is an entirely new way to experience and visualize the music, to assist in performing music (both as a conductor and/or performer), and to provide a whole new methodology for music analysis and theory. The Adagio utilizes musical "hit points", such as a transition from one musical section to another (for example, in a musical composition utilizing the sonata form, a transition from the exposition to the development section) to help define the compositions flow rate. Once the flow rate is established, the Adagio can be used to determine if the composer/performer/conductor has correctly maintained the proper rate of flow throughout the performance. An example is provided using Mozart's Piano Concerto Number 21. Working with the Adagio yielded an unexpected windfall; it was determined via an empirical study conducted at Nova University's Biofeedback Lab that watching the Adagio helped volunteers participating in a controlled experiment recover from stressors significantly faster than the control group. The Adagio can be thought of as a new arrow in the Musicologist's quiver. It provides a new, unique way of viewing the psychological impact and esthetic effectiveness of music composition. Additionally, with the current worldwide access to multi-media via the internet, flow analysis can be performed and shared with others with little time and/or expense.

**Keywords :** musicology, music analysis, music flow, music therapy

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