

The Sound of Getting Closer: A Phenomenological Research of the Senses of Proximity and Touch

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Abstract : Closer is a wireless system developed by the "Design Research Lab" of the UdK Berlin that is able to detect the proximity and touch between two (or more) persons. We have been using this system for one performance and one installation: in both cases, the proximity and touch events of the two participants have been sonified using the software Supercollider. In this paper, we are going to focus on the actual experience of the participants involved, especially related to the awareness of their body, their level of proprioception and how they felt in their body and in connection with the other person. In order to give value to the lived experience of the participant, a phenomenological method described and developed by Professor Claire Petitmengin has been used. This strategy allowed the interviewees to become aware of their subjective experience, and describe it with great precision. This is essential in order to understand the actual state of consciousness of the users. Our aim is to research the senses of proprioception, touch, and proximity: as they all involve a pre-reflective state of consciousness, they are central for the understanding of human perception. The interviews revealed how this experience could improve and increase proprioception and awareness of your body.

Keywords : interactive sound, phenomenology, pre-reflective, proprioception, subjective experience

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