Noticing Musical Becomings: Deleuzian and Guattarian Approaches to Ethnographic Studies of Musicking

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In this article, we expand conceptually upon approaches in cultural musicology and ethnomusicology that conceive of music in terms of shifting textual signs and performances of cultural meaning.[1] Our aim is to propose some new ways of considering music in terms of relational events, doing, and becoming. We ask: what if music does more than symbolically mediate and represent worlds? What if music constantly comes into being and does things as part of intrinsically messy realities that consist of relations between a variety of processes and things: vibrations, sounds, sensations and feelings, human bodies and minds, non–human entities, words and meanings, spaces, movements and materialities, (re)arrangements of social organization and power, and more? How might our conceptions of music, on the one hand, and our methodological stances, on the other, reconfigure if we harness this kind of relational and inherently heterogeneous occurring as a starting point?

Our questions are inspired by the process thinking of French philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari and by the work of latter–day theorists who develop this thinking, such as Rosi Braidotti, Claire Colebrook, Rebecca Coleman, Elizabeth Grosz, and Brian Massumi. Deleuze and Guattari's work can be regarded as an effort to contest transcendent ways of thinking. Deleuze and Guattari pursue this aim by aspiring to an ontology that is not grounded upon being but upon the processuality or primary dynamism of reality. In his early sole–authored work *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze equates being with becoming by stating that identities only emerge from repetition *as* difference: "Returning is thus the only identity . . . ; the identity of difference, the identical which belongs to the different, or turns around the different" (1994, 41). This to say that things—whether human subjects, philosophical ideas, or musical formations—are not founded on an essence. Their being, or identity, consists in their processual, and thereby inevitably varying, situationally actualizing, open–ended existence. Being is the effect of (the return of) difference rather than difference being the effect of being (see, for e.g., Deleuze 1994, 41, 55). The order between being and becoming gets overturned. Better

put, the category of being loses explanatory power and dissolves into becoming. It is, indeed, *becoming* that will figure and be elaborated as the guiding concept of our theoretical reflections in this article, illuminated by examples drawn from our recent ethnographic work.

Deleuze and Guattari's theorizations have started to gain increasing attention in scholarship on music over the past decade (see Bogue 2003; Stivale 2003; Buchanan and Swiboda 2004; Hulse and Nesbitt 2010; Macarthur 2010; Redner 2010; Thompson and Biddle 2013; and Campbell 2013). Despite their best intentions, many of these studies still overlook the potential inherent in Deleuzian and Guattarian philosophy for rethinking music ontology. For instance, the collection *Sounding the Virtual* takes as a promising starting point the profound challenge that Deleuze's philosophy poses to "a discourse on music that is rooted in extended, object–oriented metaphors, or that presupposes dualisms between 'the listener' and 'the music'" (Hulse and Nesbitt 2010, xvi). Yet many of the collection's articles delineate their subject matter conventionally as musical works created by one agent—the composer. Similarly, Edward Campbell's *Music after Deleuze* aims to demonstrate how Deleuze and Guattari "direct attention away from the agency of the composer to the mobile and transient forces active within a particular musical artwork or repertoire" (Campbell 2013, 65). Campbell claims to explore the multiple "rhizomatic" connections that operate "between concepts of music, social practice, the development of instruments and instrumental techniques, musical systems, notation, performance styles and practice, developments in technology, performance spaces, musical institutions, recording and reproduction of music, relationships with literature, visual arts and philosophy and innumerable other factors" (ibid., 36). However, he focuses mainly on musical parameters of pitch, timbre, tempo, rhythm, and duration, as well as on the insights Deleuze and Guattari offer for musical semiotics.[2]

In distinction from Deleuzian studies of music as scores or structures of sound attributed principally to composers, our reflections adopt Christopher Small's (1998) idea of *musicking* as a starting point.[3] That is, we engage musics as acts that establish and emerge from sets of relationships in the places and times in which they are occurring. In Small's words, "it is in those relationships that the meaning of the act [of musicking] lies" (Small 1998, 9). We expand Small's concept in this article in ways guided by concepts from Deleuze–Guattarian thought, with the aim of diversifying the relations and processes that can be discerned within musicking. In our examples, the notion of musical performance, central to Small's approach, takes on new forms and participants, stretching beyond its more established meanings.

Up until now, most adaptations of Deleuze and Guattari's thinking by music scholars have concentrated methodologically upon philosophy or music theory and analysis.[4] Unlike most previous Deleuze–Guattarian–inspired studies of music, our insights concerning the usefulness of their thinking arise from our ethnographic examinations of a variety of musickings, ranging from musical practices involving a deaf rapper, students of operatic singing, and indigenous women, to experimental dance and contact improvisation. We present short descriptions of these ethnographic projects later on in this paper to illustrate how Deleuze–Guattarian philosophy, especially their concept of becoming, has helped us to engage with and understand our research subjects differently, enabling new capacities for experiencing music, becoming with it, researching it, and grasping its emergences as part of socio–material realities.[5]

Our ethnographic studies exist relative to recent work in cultural musicology and ethnomusicology on music as a contextual and signifying process. Some of the key presuppositions of such studies begin to appear problematic from the vantage points of Deleuze–Guattarian thought. These include the priority given to meaning or signification and the primacy of human participations or agencies in musicking. We are keen to expand upon conceptions of music focused on signification, illustrating with our ethnographic examples that it is not only systems and processes of symbolic meaning–making that shape the relationships of musicking. The registers involved in relationships of musicking encompass a wider scope: musical becomings emerge within varying interplays of both material and symbolic or discursive forces. In fleshing out these Deleuze–Guattarian lines of research, we expand the focus from musicking in the context of culture and symbolic mediation to consider the constant becoming and actualization of musical occasions, which acquire corporeal and more broadly material, kinetic and tactile, aural and visual, spatio–temporal, and social forms. Actualization is the always temporary outcome of becoming as the potentiality for being; actualizations unfold from becoming. Actualizations are actual, accomplished acts, states of affairs, and so on, which are re–mobilized by the infinite processuality and differing of becoming (see e.g. Colebrook 2005, 9–10).

Deleuze and Guattari strive not to privilege the becomings of human existence at the expense of the wider living and inorganic world, which has been a recurring tendency in Western philosophy. Their concept of becoming seeks to acknowledge the varied ways in which diverse things exist as process, ranging from human bodies, concepts, and languages to, for example, microorganisms and animal species. Their major collaborative work *A Thousand Plateaus* is replete with examples of becomings of

different kinds (see, for e.g., Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 7–8, 22–23, 39–74, 232–309). Becomings intermingle: highly various things, stretching from human cultural expressive patterns to material resources and textures, may encounter, impact on each other, and thus become anew through their mutual co–productive relations. Heterogeneous elements have situationally formed agency of their own kind, and they participate divergently in building and transforming existence in its material, social, and cultural dimensions.[6] In this article, we refer to these other– or more–than–human processes that nonetheless intrinsically affect human becomings with the general term *non–human*.[7] While the non–human is not the focus of our article, we will point out that non–human processes attain their own veritable agency, inasmuch as they can affect and be affected by other types of becomings, such as human ones.

Toward Noticing Musicking

In her book *Ordinary Affects* (2007), Kathleen Stewart employs *noticing* as a methodological principle for approaching the surrounding worlds of which the researcher is a part. Deleuze–inspired sociologists Rebecca Coleman and Jessica Ringrose have drawn upon Stewart's approach, arguing that "putting to work some of Deleuze's ideas about the world and ways of studying it might help to shed light on other ways of knowing, relating to and creating the world, 'noticing' . . . different kinds of things that might be happening, or things that might be happening differently" (Coleman and Ringrose 2013, 4).[8] Inspired by Deleuze and Guattari, and as one way of reaching toward new styles of observing, studying, and conceptualizing musickings as profoundly processual, always multiple, relational comings into being—as becomings—we suggest an associated epistemological and ontological shift from knowing music—being able to read its "codes" or pin down its meanings—to *noticing* musicking in its ever–fuller diversity and variation.[9]

In music studies, a move away from knowing toward noticing could be explained as a move away from certainty regarding what music(king) is toward a productive uncertainty that leaves room for new imaginings, research encounters, and methodological experimenting. Thus, being sure about the kinds of activities that comprise musicking and the kinds of actors involved in those activities represents in our account the ethos of knowing. Noticing, in its turn, proceeds from never being definitively sure of the features, qualities, or participants of musicking in the first place. It

seeks to move toward observing—and taking seriously—becomings, the unexpected, and what we will later call singular processes of differently situated musickings, including the researcher's entanglements with them.

Thus, we suggest that noticing consists of efforts to remain open to the proliferating becomings and relations of music(king). It is one way to re–map both musics and methodological approaches in conjunction with Deleuze–Guattarian philosophy, particularly their notion of becoming. Becomings cannot be known in advance or reduced in any straightforward manner to cultural and analytical features recognized a priori. In contrast to its more customary connotations, noticing, in this sense, does not primarily identify preexisting identities and structures "behind" occasions of reality. As a methodological guideline adopted in the ethnographic case studies that follow, it is more concerned with remaining open to the different agencies and interconnections that particular becomings of reality might include—"different" in the sense of different from what has already been encountered. Defined in this way, noticing presents a means for reinvigorating research approaches to what musics can be and do—how they become.

Case Study 1. Noticing Vibrations by Becoming Deaf

When studying the musicking of Signmark (Marko Vuoriheimo), a Finnish rap artist born deaf into a signing family, I (Taru Leppänen) found that the concept of *vibration* allowed new becomings to emerge in connection to conventional ideas of musical authorship.[10] Signmark describes his music as party hip hop that takes a stand. He raps about the experiences and history of Deaf communities and about his own experiences as a Deaf person. Signmark's performances differ from those of more conventional hip hop artists because he does not produce sound while musicking. He performs by signing, moving, and dancing, while computers, sound equipment, amplifiers, and his human collaborators produce musical sounds.[11] Signmark's live shows are always bilingual, performed using International Sign Language and spoken Finnish or English—he uses sign language, and his collaborator Brandon sings in English. Signmark rhymes signs by ensuring the reminiscence of hand forms and signs, and he reinforces the signs with facial expressions. Improvisation is an essential part of the overall package.

Low frequencies have a crucial function in Signmark's musicking. Palpable vibrations help him to feel musical sounds and to adapt his signing and lyrics to a given rhythm. Signmark has explained that he "finds

it easiest to feel instruments that produce low–frequency vibrations, such as bass, drums, and piano." A strong bass line is an essential element in his performances, since it enables him to follow the music and time his rhymes. According to Signmark, "[my] own realm consists of lyrics, message, and music in connection with the sense of touch. This includes basses and vibrations" (Mattila 2014, translated from Finnish by the author). Signmark embraces musicking as a practice to be negotiated through bodily vibrations: "It is often thought that music is only for the hearing, but this is not true. The vibrations coming from the bass provide the rhythm that I use to connect to the music. I use my full body to tap in and visualize with emotions and bodily motions. If there is no motion, there is no rhythm" (cited in Menon 2012). Heard music evidently also consists of vibrations, but Signmark mostly feels vibrations without hearing them as pitches or other sonic qualities. Signmark's musicking loosens the often–presupposed connection between music and hearing while manifesting the multimodal sensory becomings of musicking as vibrations. As Deleuze argued, rhythm is essentially connected to sensation—"[s]ensation is vibration" (Deleuze 2002, 39).

Signmark's musicking consists, then, among other factors, of vibratory communication between human and non–human bodies. The sounds that he feels are generated by technology; the beats are made with computers and sound equipment. The vibrations disperse over human and non–human bodies as part of a shared formation of authorship. In so far as music is approached as musicking, its authorship is always shared. Authorship does not reside in any individual body or subjectivity. It is rather an *assemblage* composed of manifold components. For Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 406), assemblages are provisional groupings of components that affect one another and co–produce reality without being subsumed under a totalizing identity. Musicking often comprises agents, human and non–human, who are not directly producing sound. Even if there is only one person singing, musicking involves, as Signmark's case illustrates, non–human capabilities and agents, such as technologies and vibrations.

In my view, Signmark's musicking entails two specific kinds of new becomings in relation to the question of authorship. Firstly, Deaf musicians are rarely considered as authors in Western music cultures or music studies; in this example, we can notice the becoming–author of a Deaf musician through vibrations. Secondly, Signmark's musicking creates a particular musicking assemblage that contains Deaf and non–Deaf bodies as well as human and non–human agents. The politics of these two kinds of becomings differ from each other. At a moment when Deaf studies seem to be operating on the margins of Western societies and music studies, recogniz-

ing the latter kind of becoming—the becoming of a musicking assemblage that entails distributed authorship—could appear to undo the possibility of recognition for Deaf musical authorship and identity in conventional terms. However, I argue that these two kinds of becoming coalesce in the processes of becoming Deaf and are both needed in order to acknowledge Signmark's and Deaf musicians' authorship.

Importantly, Signmark does not want to pass as a hearing musician. Rather, he both maintains and blurs the difference between non–Deaf and Deaf in his performances. In his musicking, deafness is not expressed as a disability. According to him (Signmark Productions 2014), "society should not treat the Deaf as handicapped people, but as a linguistic minority with their own culture, community, history, and heritage." Instead of inhabiting a fixed Deaf identity, Signmark is becoming Deaf while musicking. Because of the open–ended and unpredictable nature of becoming, we cannot know what Deafhood is. In considering becoming, we turn away from stabilized identities—from how Deaf and non–Deaf people are usually understood in the context of musical practices—to pay attention to change and transformation. A Deaf or a Hearing person is becoming–Deaf when he or she is related to forces that are attached to Deaf people.

Understood in this way, Deaf and non–Deaf people's bodies are capable of affecting each other within Signmark's musicking. Affect is "the chance, or variation, that occurs when bodies . . . come into contact" with each other (Colman 2005, 11). Signmark's fans and audiences consist of both Deaf and Hearing audiences, and his performances give non–Deaf audiences a possibility to become Deaf. They, including me as a researcher, can celebrate Deafness even if it is not experienced in their own bodies. Becoming Deaf does not mean becoming non–Hearing or non–listening. Becoming Deaf denotes moving away from audism and from conventional ways of experiencing music in terms of non–Deaf people. In the processes of becoming Deaf, Deafhood transforms from a restriction or confinement into potentialities for new becomings and actualizations. This process is enabled by understanding sound as "a vibration of a certain frequency in a material medium rather than centering vibrations in a hearing ear" (Friedner and Helmreich 2012, 6). In other words, when Deaf and Hearing bodies are musicking in Signmark's performances, they are no longer merely Deafs or non–Deafs. The co–action of their bodies enables subjectivities and embodiments that cannot be simply designated as characteristic of either Deaf or Hearing people.

The above–offered ideas—of sound as processes of vibration, and of musical authorship as an enmeshment of human and non–human, multisensory activities—provide us with one means of thinking musically with

the Deleuze–Guattarian concept of becoming. What we tend to conceive of as (relatively) stable entities making up a musical reality can be understood to comprise processual becomings on a fundamental constitutive level. For instance: objects we may perceive as solid consist molecularly of vibrating particles; seemingly steady musical pitches are comprised of oscillating air pressure waves; and human bodies constantly re–form in terms of biological and psychosomatic processes, affective states, social framings, and situationally enacted capacities and relations.

One of the ways in which Deleuze and Guattari shift Western thinking from the prioritization of essences and being toward the primacy of processuality is by equating becoming with "the middle." They write: "A line of becoming is not defined by points that it connects, or by points that compose it; on the contrary, it passes between points, it comes up through the middle." "[T]o speak of the absence of an origin," they continue, "to make the absence of an origin the origin, is a bad play on words. A line of becoming has only a middle" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 293). To sum it up simply, this connection drawn between becoming and "the middle" emphasizes that things do not begin from a point of origin and arrive at the next point–like state of being. Rather, they are always in the midst of potential or actual transition, and this constitutes their manner of existing. The concept of vibration offers one means for grasping the "in the middle" nature of musical becomings.

Case Study 2. Singularities of Operatic Music–Making: Assemblages and Experimentation

Musical events, expressions, and sound–making bodies become differently across occasions and settings of musicking. No two becomings or actualizations can be identical. This is because both the relations between the heterogeneous participating elements and the ways identities continually re–emerge vary from one moment to the next. Difference reigns over sameness. Becomings can hence be described as *singular*.[12] Singularity, for Deleuze and Guattari, refers precisely to the unrepeatability of any becoming and actualization in an identical form due to the primacy and returns of difference. As Tom Conley encapsulates it in his outline of Deleuze's understandings of the term, "[a] singularity is a unique point but it is also a point of perpetual recommencement and of variation" (Conley 2005, 253). For us, these ideas raise some new questions: What could be music or

musicking as a singularity? How far will the concept of music stretch along these Deleuze–Guattarian lines? Whose capacities (bodily, epistemic, and so on) are increased if we expand the concept of music in this manner?

The ineradicable singularity of musical occasions—even when they concern the long–rehearsed performance of musical textures that have a detailed notated form and a lengthy performance history—became a key concern in our second example. This example concerns an ethnographic study that I (Milla Tiainen) conducted with students of Western classical and operatic singing at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki. From the outset, my main interest within this project was how music takes shape *as* performance in the practices of operatic singers.[13] My fieldwork on the students' vocal studies and on their remaking of Mozart's *Così fan tutte* in particular stretched over two years. I observed singers' individual lessons, coaching sessions, ensemble rehearsals, and performances of *Così*, and I conducted semi–structured interviews with the singers and some of their coaches.

Maybe due to my own past studies of classical singing, I entered the Sibelius Academy with presuppositions about how the authoritative figure of the composer and "his" elusive intentions, work– and notation–fidelity, musical canons and conventions, would shape the singers' music–makings to a notable degree.[14] The idea of transmitting the composer's intentions and the preexisting musical work without disturbance, as it were, did sometimes appear during rehearsals and interviews. One student stressed, for instance, that he wasn't sure if it was appropriate to perform Mozart's *Così fan tutte* with the Elvis– and John Travolta–inspired dance moves that the students' remaking of the opera had come to include. Mostly, however, the students' music–making occasions and discussions broached an array of topics that diverged from work– and composer–centered tenets.[15]

Closely following these singers' practices, I became aware of a range of elements participating in their music–making that we might, after the Deleuze–Guattarian–inspired cultural theorist Brian Massumi, call "more–than–human." With this expression, Massumi (2013, xxiii) refers both to any number of contingencies that are not directly human but which affect human existence and capacities, and to the excess of "currently human potential." Through the latter formulation, Massumi refers to the unpredictability of human futures and ways of being in local as well as wider historical and ontological senses. In my field material, more–than–human participants can be said to have been at play, for example, when the stage director suggested that one of the singers could search for a suitable kinaesthetic style for his aria by reworking the relationship between his body and the rehearsal room floor. Echoing principles of movement improvisation, the director urged the singer to seek ways of putting his body

in contact with the floor—whether by crawling, by jumping, or by other means of occupying space and time—that would diverge both from his habitual bodily dispositions in classical singing and his embodied past in classical ballet. This exercise in reconfiguring one's felt and enacted relation with a more–than–human material construct resulted in new body movements, which found their way into the singer's choreography.

A second example of more–than–human elements pertains to the repeated references that the singers made to the role of site acoustics in their musicking. One female singer underlined the radical change in her auditory and proprioceptive perceptions of her own voice that was brought forth by the transfer from the rehearsal room ("that basement") into the performance auditorium ("a shower box") in the final stages of rehearsals. In this instance, the more–than–human materialities of these two venues became an active—and in each case singular—part of the interrelating and co–productive elements from which my interviewee's vocalizations, her (and others') sensory experience of them, and the students' rendition of *Così fan tutte* emerged.

While I had entered the field with an interest in the processual and interactive features of classical music–making, the examples above and many others greatly expanded my perception of the kinds of processes and relations involved.[16] Ethnographic immersion compelled me to notice, in Coleman and Ringrose's sense, numerous variables or registers of operatic musicking that I had not acknowledged before. It initiated the need to turn to Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy of becoming and to their specific concepts, such as assemblage, to better account for the occurring realities of operatic singing and performing. I became convinced of the fruitfulness of approaching these practices as always taking shape in the middle (in the ontological sense proposed by Deleuze and Guattari), instead of putting excessive stress on discipline, work–aesthetics, and other aspects more commonly associated with classical music. The ethnographic material had challenged me to rethink the very units of analysis: during the fieldwork, it started to seem increasingly important not to begin the analysis from individual musical textures, musicians, or even groups of performers; rather, it seemed crucial to ask what elements coexisted at a given moment, across divides (human/non–human or material/symbolic), and how each element appeared to emerge anew from this togetherness. In line with Deleuze and Guattari's concept of assemblage, I could understand each new element or connection as qualitatively changing the whole constellation.

In the process of noticing operatic music–making in terms of becomings and assemblages, I came to realize the prominence of experimentation in classical music culture. Following Deleuze and Guattari (1983, 371), the

term *experimentation* refers to methods of doing and interactive arrange-ments that do not involve permanent rules, nor firmly defined preconcep-tions about hoped–for outcomes. Each new experience is partly an experi-mentation in as much as it comprises an encounter between things—such as a performer, a voice, a space, and a listener—that did not exist before, and whose unrolling and effects cannot be exhaustively predicted. The singers' practices that I researched were replete with experimentation concerning, for example, how different and situationally improvised modes of spoken address might—or might not—affect the workings of a particular singer's voice and body during singing lessons. Once, for instance, a teacher en-couraged a student to re–imagine her body first as a well–rooted tree, and then as a "mother eagle" that spreads its wings, in order to discover a more relaxed mode of vocal projection. Following Deleuze and Guattari (see 1987, 75–85), the language used about singing in this situation operated experimentally, as the teacher and singer explored what words can do to the singer's voice/body and mental processes, and what her specific voice and body/mind can do in relation to the words in turn. Instead of a hierar-chical model with a composer and musical work on top, performers in the middle, and listeners at the bottom, the singers' practices I engaged with disclosed a much more horizontal plane of varying, singular, experimental, and co–productive "in–betweens," such as those between language and bodies, between voices, scores and physical locales, between fellow human sound–making and listening bodies, and so forth.

Case Study 3. Noticing Musicking in the Formation of Common Notions

In my ongoing artistically oriented research on movement improvisation, I (Hanna Väätäinen) have used experimentation as a method of noticing music(kings) with the aid of Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy. Deleuze's interpretation of Spinoza's concept of forming *common notions* offered me a way to combine artistic and scholarly work and connect music research with dance practice.[17] Deleuze understands Spinoza's common notions to be the art of "organizing good encounters, composing actual relations, forming powers, experimenting" (Deleuze 1988, 119). The formation of common notions proceeds, in my study, from encounters of movement improvisers with their surroundings—with what they see, hear, feel and touch, as well as with concepts. These encounters, by chance, empower the improvisers in some respects, reflected in the qualities of the bodies

involved. I take common notions to be kinetic as well as conceptual—a way of moving or approaching a problem can be a common notion between two or several bodies.

In this kind of experimental framework, musickings can be noticed in situations that do not involve performances of musical sound. Dancing without music, or without sounds commonly defined as music, is typical in contact and movement improvisation. The practice of noticing musickings in such dancing can acquire a variety of forms—paying attention to the sounds of the dancing or of dancers' breathing and clothing, to the thumps produced by their jumps and bounces, to the tramping of feet and the squeaking of wheelchair wheels. It can also mean noticing changes in the relations between dancers' bodies and their surroundings.

My current collaborator is Anneli Tiilikainen, a movement improvisation enthusiast who has a visual disability and who lives in the town of Joensuu in Eastern Finland. During our encounters in 2013 and 2014, we combined verbal discussions with dancing in different locations. These encounters were documented on video camera and through written notes made after each session. We alternated between discussion and movement improvisation, using movement to respond to physical locations and to develop dancerly and theoretical ideas. The process resulted, among other things, in the formation of analytical movements or movement qualities—kinetic analytical tools for music research. Experimenting and noticing in this research project involved inventing ways of making Anneli Tiilikainen's ideas accessible for Deleuze–Guattarian–influenced music and dance scholarship and rendering Deleuze–Guattarian concepts accessible for Anneli Tiilikainen. It entailed developing scenarios for fieldwork situations, planning ethnographic encounters, and analyzing research topics in constitutive co–operation with research participants.

In one fieldwork experiment, Anneli Tiilikainen and I watched a ten–minute short film on experimental dance titled *Point* (directed by Pirjo Ojala). The film tells a story of a group of people with different disabilities finding their way from one floor to another in a Finnish shopping center. While watching, we simultaneously danced with the film. During this dancerly viewing, Anneli Tiilikainen created rapid hand movements back and forth as a bodily and movement improvisational response to the film. We developed these hand movements as analytical tools, as ways of forming common notions between movement improvisation, questions of disability and access, and Deleuze–Guattarian philosophy. Common notions in this context were ideas that enabled bodily movements and philosophical concepts to approach and adapt to each other, and to work collaboratively in the analysis.

Anneli Tiilikainen chose to describe her hand movements with the word "splintered," relating the experience of touching a sharply textured or somewhat broken surface. She associated the shaking quality of the movement with the hostility of inaccessible places from the point of view of a disabled person. I later tried out this movement quality together with Anneli Tiilikainen in a market place, on a children's playground, at a botanical garden, in a meeting room at a university library, in a listening room at a municipal library, and in her two flats, in order to see how it functioned as an analytical tool in these different locations, discovering what these places did to the movement and what the movement did to the places. We discussed the splintered quality of the movements in relation to the characteristics of the places and to the concepts of the smooth and the striated (generated by composer Pierre Boulez and modified by Deleuze and Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus*).[18] A back–and–forth movement can produce both a smooth and a striated space depending on who or what makes the movement and on what kind of relation the movement has to other parts of the assemblage (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 474–500). "Splintered" emerged as a third quality in addition to the smoothness and striatedness of spaces, one that reflects a way somebody experiences the combination of smoothness and striatedness in a particular space

In my research, noticing musicking involved engaging a disabled dancer's response to an inaccessible place. The fast back–and–forth hand movement articulates the ways in which Anneli Tiilikainen experienced the combination of smoothness and striatedness in the public spaces depicted in the short film that we watched and moved to together. Noticing musicking entailed considering this splintered movement as a special kind of spatio–temporal process, bodily vibration, and site–specific relation between bodies and spaces—as a a dancerly way of musicking.

Case Study 4. Affects of Musicking

In my current ethnomusicological study of the *Āma Samuha* (Mothers' Group) musicking of the Gurung village women of Nepal, I (Pirkko Moisala) have used the concept of *affect* to study how bodies and communities are influenced and reshaped in preconscious ways. As Brian Massumi explains (2009, 1–2), affect, according to Deleuze and Guattari as well as Spinoza, can be understood as a basic transition, a qualitative change, in a being's state and powers of existence. This transition cannot be perceived fully consciously, but it has a noticeable impact upon ways of acting, felt experience, and/or ways of thinking. On the one hand, af-

fect is conditioned by the accumulated history of the one undergoing the transition; on the other hand, it always occurs in contingent relations with other beings and bodies. Affect is a reconfiguration of capacities of being—of capacities to feel, to participate in occasions, and to stumble across new connections, courses of action, and thoughts (Deleuze 1988; Massumi 2002). In our understanding of the term, in short, affect ultimately refers to movements of becoming.

In November 2013, I did fieldwork in Klinu, a mountain village in mid–Nepal inhabited mainly by Tamu/Gurung[19] people. It had been twenty years since my previous visit.[20] At the outset, the village looked very much the same, with a few exceptions: all yards were clean, each house had an outhouse, and many houses received running water from a pipe in the yard. Many men and some youth had mobile phones. Tin roofs had replaced stone and thatched roofs, and a few houses had a small solar power system on the roof. Instead of having to walk for two days to reach the village, it was now possible to drive close to the village by bus.

The village soundscape was also much like before, filled with people's shouts, the voices of chicken and roosters, goats, dogs, and water buffaloes, and the sounds of bird song. An airplane flying overhead once a day was the only sound of an engine to be heard. Teenagers' drumming and singing no longer echoed in the crisp evenings, because their parents wished for their children to concentrate on schoolwork. However, the same public music and dance performances were still arranged, such as the epic Ghātu, which tells the story of an ancient king and his court, and the Thetār of the youth, which are dance performances to popular tunes. All of these daily sounds can be regarded in Deleuzian terms as rhythms that create the village milieu by providing it with consistency: "every milieu is . . . a block of spacetime constituted by the periodic repetition of the components" (Deleuze & Guattari 1987, 345).

One of the most noticeable changes in the village soundscape was musical performances provided by adult women of the *Āma Samuha* (Mothers' Group). Twenty years ago, it was against the community's social norms for older women to perform music in public. The singing voices of older women were considered ugly and, when some of the older women tried to join performing male singers, they were laughed out of the situation. I was told that the *Āma Samuha* was established after women gained a couple of additional hours of daily work–free time thanks to the installation of a water pipe that discharged them from carrying water. According to retired schoolteacher Shova Gurung, who was active in promoting and gaining legal recognition for the group, the process was gradual and not easy: "In the beginning, only a few of us would meet, to discuss the mothers' group

and to make plans. . . . We talked about how to develop the village, save its culture and how to establish a care center for elderly people in the old school. After several discussions, we decided to form a society. . . . It was very hard to form a formal mothers' society because many people were against it, but I did not give up. Finally, our society is now registered officially and we have legal authority [which is needed for establishing the care center]" (translated from Tamu–kwai and Nepali by Tanka Gurung and the author).

The women collect money for charitable purposes by performing music on special occasions, such as weddings, to occasional visitors and villagers returning from work in cities or abroad. "We just come together and perform sometimes when there are guests and villagers working abroad who come to visit," Shova Gurung explained to me. "Gradually we save the money and use it for developmental work in our society and to help people in distress." This practice is customary in Tamu society; villagers never arrange musical performances only for pure entertainment. The custom is that the ones to whom the performance is addressed have to pay for the music. Now the women had decided to do the same, arranging musical events in order to collect money for the needs of the village.

At *Āma Samuha* performances, middle aged or older women sing and dance popular *lok git* and *dohori* songs, using two–headed cylinder–shaped *mādal* drums as accompanying instruments.[21] Some of the songs are of local origin, but most are learned from radio programs. All women present clap their hands to the music, most of them sing, three *mādal* drums circulate from one woman to the next, and two to three women at a time take turns as dancers on a small area in the middle of the crowd. Tens of women take part in these performances; many told me how enjoyable it was to come and have fun (in Nepali, *ramailo garnu*) together with other women, and I observed how enthusiastically women took part in these performances. The president of the *Āma Samuha* Kashi Gurung expressed how proud she was of the society's accomplishments in the village: "The activities of the *Āma Samuha* make me feel great because women have power and they have achieved so many things in the village, such as the community house and the (Buddhist] Ghumba temple, and have raised social and cultural awareness [among the villagers]. We feel very proud and happy about this and we wish to do more" (translated from Tamu–kwai and Nepali by Tanka Gurung and the author).

Through *Āma Samuha*, village women are reconstituting themselves in their social and material lives. Public music–making for the material gain of the village is providing them with a new empowered position in the village society. Stating simply that *Āma Samuha* with its activities constitutes

a remarkable socio–musical change in the village could be the conclusion of my report. However, there is more to this event than women escaping and transcending social norms placed upon older and married women. Rather than just changes in the gendered socioeconomic structure of the village being demonstrated at these performance events, the subjectivity of the women as well as the whole village milieu were becoming in new ways.

When the middle–aged and older women first began to make music, they had to open their rusty voices to sing, train their hands and arms to play the double–sided cylinder–shaped *mādal* drums, and move their bodies in novel ways in order to dance.[22] However, if approached through Deleuzian philosophy, a musicking body is not only a corporeal human body; it is a body coming into being through relations, since bodies are affected and they affect through their relations (Deleuze 1992, 625). Examined from this perspective, becoming in these musical performances is less about encounters between discrete individual bodies and other (pre-given) entities than an event of emergent potentiality created by affective work. If approached as events in the Deleuzian sense, these performances are not fixed entities with a clear beginning and end; they are "rather inside what occurs" (Deleuze 1990, 147).

The affective work of these musical performances is not only about the sounds, their human makers and listeners but, as an event, it involves the whole emerging milieu. According to the Tamu worldview, engagements between humans and environments, as well as between human and non–human entities are holistic, connective, and relational (Strickland 1982 and Mumford 1990, 31). Local deities and gods are approached for blessings, and the flowing water of mountain streams and human encounters with the contours of steep mountain slopes are involved in the formation and aesthetics of group singing and dancing. For instance, the frequently stated aesthetic ideal of musicking "salalā pāni page jastāi" maintains that excellent dancing and singing "flows like the water [in a mountain stream]." Affects thus arise here from relations between the human and the non–human, the material and the immaterial, as well as the social and the physical. Musicking creates encounters of sounds, environments, human minds and bodies, non–human beings and materialities, musical instruments and other material paraphernalia of the event. *Āma Samuha* performance achieves affective work by drawing the participants within its space and time, re–embodying, reorienting, and re–ontologizing them. Furthermore, even though such a musical performance may seem to repeat an already–known pattern, as an event and when approached from the Deleuzian perspective, it "does not bring back 'the same' but returning constitutes the only same of that which becomes" (Deleuze 1994, 41).

Examining *Āma Samuha* performance as an event from this perspective reveals the powerful agency possessed by the women performers and their singing, dancing, and drumming female bodies: the new expressive embodiments of these performers and the socioeconomic positions they have claimed for themselves through these musical activities, when connected with other materialities, cosmologies, and discursive forces, create affects and intensities that carry potential transformative vitality for the whole village milieu. There are already signs of how these women's performances have begun to create a socially more equal and sustainable community. According to Shova Gurung, "In the past, it was the custom in Klinu that only poor people should perform [music], and men used to say that women should not perform in public. But after we women united and have started to perform, not only the poor but everyone—women, the poor, the rich—can perform, with no division in performing. . . . Today, men do not boycott our performances, but they also support the mothers' society" (translated from Tamu–kwai and Nepali by Tanka Gurung and the author). By approaching musical performances like these as affective events, one may witness the musical precedents of "a people to come."

Epilogue. On Noticing Musickings

In this article, we introduced lines of thought into our theory and ethnographic practice that strongly problematize a worldview premised on being—on things having an identity prior to their relations and occurrences in time. We sought to move beyond affording primacy to concepts of symbolic meaning and representation. Inspired by Deleuzian and Guattarian radical process philosophy, we have proposed an alternative line of enquiry—noticing—that can open new possibilities for ethnographic studies of various kinds of musicking. It involves paying particular attention to becomings.

In order to highlight the utility of Deleuzian and Guattarian thinking, we chose to provide brief examples from our own current studies that are linked to several areas of music research: popular music studies, art music studies, musical performance studies, dance studies, and ethnomusicology. We have examined how musicking bodies can produce new becomings of milieus; the importance of vibrations within rap musicking; the methodologically experimental creation of common notions in improvisatory dance; the ways in which non–human factors can participate in constituting musical events; and the ways that the significantly codified practices of Western classical music are ultimately a dynamic confluence effect of diverse becomings.

Supported by Deleuzian and Guattarian thinking, we took the approach that it would be beneficial to allow ourselves as music scholars an openness to new possibilities of encountering and grasping what composes the musickings we study, instead of mainly seeking already known structures and categories in relation to our research topics and fields. Noticing itself required an epistemic and methodological shift from the predominance of meaning and acts of recognition (knowing) toward engaging with musics increasingly as becomings: as ever–processual relational events that prompt the concepts and methods of music studies to also become in new ways.

We propose that notions of becoming, affect, noticing, singularity, assemblage, and experimentation can enhance understandings of musical practices by figuring them as ontologically open–ended in terms of their social and material potential. Coleman and Ringrose have noted that a Deleuzian approach is "as much a mapping of what is impossible, what becomes stuck or fixed, as it is of flux and flow" (Coleman and Ringrose 2013. 9). Elaborating on this, we conceive of the task of a music studies informed by the concepts of becoming and noticing to be about discovering what knowledges and identities related to musics we may have unnecessarily fixed, who or what these stabilized formations may prioritize or marginalize, and what as yet unrecognizable processes might be flowing within phenomena we thought we had grasped, which will propel our research approaches and engagements with musics into reinvigorated becomings.

Notes

1. This article is a product of our research project "Deleuzian Music Research," financed by the Academy of Finland and conducted at the University of Helsinki in 2011–2016 (www. helsinki.fi/deleuzian). We wish to thank the anonymous readers and Kip Pegley for their valuable suggestions, as well as the Swedish Literary Society in Finland for the financial support provided to Moisala's study.

2. Aspects of musical structure that can be identified in the score also have a central position in Gregg Redner's (2010) Deleuzian discussion of film music, which seeks to develop a methodology based upon and combining theories of music and cinema.

3. The concept of musicking has been very influential in the field of "new" musicology and cultural studies of music (see, for instance McClary 2012, xi).

4. The challenge of Deleuze and Guattari's thought to ethnographic mappings of musickings is reflected in the absence of ethnographic work drawing upon their thinking in existent music research literature. A notable exception is Charles J. Stivale's *Disenchanting les Bons Temps* (2003), which examines Cajun music in encounters between a wealth of elements such as sounds, movements, lyrics, sensations, racial tensions, and different types of venues. Jocelyne Guilbault (2005, 2007) has developed the idea of musicking as a relational event. She uses the concept of audible entanglements to "*foresound* sites, moments, and modes of enunciation articulated *through* musical practices. So, far from being 'merely' musical, audible entanglements . . . assemble social relations, cultural expressions, and political for-

mulations" (Guilbault 2005, 20–21). Sally Macarthur's *Towards a Twenty–First–Century Feminist Politics of Music* (2010) echoes a similar ontological understanding of music to the one we explore in this article, although she does not use the concept of musicking as such and her study is not ethnographic. Her study conceives of music as doing and action and interlinks multiple cultural and institutional factors, such as music education for composers, consumer culture, and concert halls.

5. More detailed discussions of the specific ethnographic projects that are discussed in this paper can be found in Leppänen (forthcoming in 2017), Moisala (forthcoming in 2017), Tiainen (forthcoming in 2017) and Väätäinen (forthcoming in 2017).

6. See, for e.g., Alaimo and Hekman 2008, 7.

7. This term has broad currency in so–called posthumanist or post human–centric research burgeoning in many disciplines of the human and social sciences, including literature, sociology, political science, performance studies, and, gradually, sound studies. For examples of recent posthumanist research, see Braidotti 2013, Bennett 2010, Wolfe 2009, Haraway 2007, and Grusin 2015. The Deleuze–Guattarian notion of non–human becomings also has connections to the growing research strand of eco–/ethno–musicology. See Feld 1982 and 1996, Guy 2009, Allen 2011, and Pedelty 2012.

8. See also Stewart 2007; and Blackman and Venn 2010.

9. Deleuze and Guattari's process thinking includes some discussions of music. At its broadest, music, for them, "is not the privilege of human beings: the universe, the cosmos, is made of refrains; the question in music is that of a power . . . permeating nature, animals, the elements, and deserts, as much as human beings" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 309). On the other hand, Deleuze and Guattari often concentrate on composers and musical artworks—especially those of the Western classical and modernist canon—while touching fleetingly upon performance practices, such as operatic singing. In this article, we mainly employ Deleuzian and Guattarian notions that do not stem directly from their writings concerning music.

10. Sound studies theorist Steve Goodman (2012) has suggested that scholars should exceed the philosophy of sound with the ontology of vibrational force. In my study of Signmark, I noticed how truly significant vibrations are in his creative processes and performances, which inspired me to elaborate on Goodman's suggestion.

11. When a rapper does not produce sound but performs by signing, dancing, and moving, his or her authorship might become questioned. In 2012, Signmark was denied royalties by the Finnish copyright society Gramex. The reason for denying the royalties, according to Gramex, was that Signmark does not create sound.

12. Such a statement does not ignore or downplay the development of habits or of relative regularities in the shaping of realities.

13. In terms of theoretical impulses, the project was inspired by and hopes to expand upon previous insights emphasizing the crucial place of performance in the very ontology of classical music (e.g. Cusick 1994 and 1999; Abbate 2004; and Cook 2003). By the time the project began, performance had started to increasingly interest Western art music scholars as a source for fresh music analytical findings and also as significant social processes within this musical field (see, for e.g., Rink 1995 and 2002). Yet, there was little research on opera as performance that drew on ethnographic methodologies.

14. As landmark projects in music philosophy and feminist musicology demonstrated in new critical light already twenty years ago, these notions are integral to modern art music culture; their formation and the hierarchies they posit between composers and musical works, performers, and listeners must be untangled and challenged (see, for e.g., Citron 1993 and Goehr 2007).

15. To give one example, many of the singers and teachers were preoccupied with the role of bodily habit memory and proprioceptive experiences in "installing" musical textures in the vocalizing body, in detecting changes in the voice, and in unlearning "wrong" modes of sound production (e.g. vocal straining).

16. For more in–depth accounts of this research, see, for example, Tiainen 2008 and Tiainen forthcoming.

17. For more information on the use of artistic methods in music and dance research inspired by Deleuze and Guattari's thought, see, for example, Tromans 2014 and Damkjaer 2015.

18. The concepts of the smooth and the striated refer to qualities of spaces and to the kinds of movements that different spaces enable. Consider a fabric, for example, as a striated space and a felt as a smooth space. In principle, the movements of the yarns are different in these two spaces. In felt, the threads are entangled in a way that produces an open texture; the same kind of texture is not possible in a fabric, where a back–and–forth motion of the yarns implies a closed space. The smooth and the striated always intermingle, which means that there is something striated and something smooth in every space.

19. "Gurung" is most frequently used in the scholarly literature and official administration, whereas "Tamu" is how people call themselves in their own unwritten language, Tamu–kwai.

20. I have done ethnomusicological fieldwork in this village several times since my first visit in 1975–76 (see Moisala 1991).

21. *Lok git* is a genre that was created by studio musicians and producers of the state–run Radio Nepal in the 1960s and 1970s to unify the diverse ethnic groups of Nepal (Grandin 1989). *Dohori git* is a song duel that has become hugely popular in Nepal during the last decade (Stirr 2009).

22. For instance, Chandi Kumari Gurung had not played any instrument before. "When I was young, I did not play *mādal*," she explained to me. "I never played it. I never was taught to play the *mādal*, I just saw people playing and then learned from watching it. . . . When I now sing, play, and dance together [with other mothers], I enjoy it and feel very happy."

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