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Experiential Ontology of Musicality of Movement Approach: A Phenomenological Study within the 4E Framework

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Traditional Western academic music performance education has historically emphasized the development of instrumental and vocal excellence through the enhancement of technical proficiency. Within this framework, the body and mind have frequently been regarded as distinct entities. However, recent research has prompted a paradigm shift in music studies, integrating the body and mind and recognizing music-making as a dynamic process of adaptation. In this context, the 4E framework emerges as a valuable perspective for examining the reciprocal causation among brain, body and environment, encompassing the concepts of Embodied, Embedded, Extended, and Enactive (4E). Given the limited research on trainings that foster capacities associated with the 4E framework in musicians, this study focuses on Musicality of Movement approach (MoM), a recently developed program designed to enhance their stage performance quality in concert settings. The investigation was systematically conducted following Giorgi's descriptive phenomenological method based on an in-depth interview with MoM developer, Virág Dezsö. Findings reveal the emergence of MoM's experiential ontology articulated around three structural dimensions of meaning: epistemological orientation, constitutive principles and academic implementation. Together, these dimensions portray MoM as a practice-based pedagogical approach whose underlying experiential ontology is consistent with all dimensions of the 4E framework.

Keywords: 4E cognition, conservatory of music, music education, musical performance, Musicality of Movement, phenomenology, stage presence

INTRODUCTION

Instructing music performance students involves not only guiding them in developing technical proficiency with their instrument or voice and cultivating a comprehensive understanding of the repertoire. It also involves aspects of physical conditioning,

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psychological resilience and stage preparedness. Nevertheless, educating musicians in the latter areas remains a necessity in the 21st century and calls for educational advancements in these domains (Altenmüller & Jabusch, 2010; Candisano Mera & Franco-Vázquez, 2022; Fernández-Morante et al., 2021; Fortuny et al., 2025; Gómez Remolina, 2014; Ramírez Flores et al., 2024; Ramírez Martínez & Rodríguez-Quiles, 2020; Sancho-Andrés et al., 2025; Stanhope, 2016; Thomson & Jacque, 2017).

Focusing on the role of the body, music performance students often lack the necessary understanding to effectively employ tools that could enhance their physical and expressive readiness (Gómez Remolina, 2014). This deficiency hinders their ability to optimize their stage presence and interpretive performance, resulting in improper use of their bodies and overextension of their capabilities (Gómez Remolina, 2014; Ramírez Flores et al., 2024; Thomson & Jacque, 2017). Such misuse can lead to the development of Playing-Related Musculoskeletal Disorders (PRMDs), which remain prevalent among them (Cruder et al., 2023; Ramírez Flores et al., 2024; Sancho-Andrés et al., 2025; Shinde & Borkar, 2021; Xiaoyu, 2024). Furthermore, PRMDs can precipitate adverse emotional states, such as reduced self-confidence, anxiety, and stress, which can negatively affect performance (Ballenberger et al., 2023; García Martínez, 2015; Shinde & Borkar, 2021; Stanhope, 2016; Thomson & Jacque, 2017; Xiaoyu, 2024). Consequently, the intrinsic enjoyment associated with musical performance is notably underrepresented in academic disciplines related to this area (Cook, 2013).

The question that emerges from the preceding discussion is whether conservatories of music adequately equip their students with the bodily tools needed for performance. In this context, only specific data from studies conducted in Spain have been identified to date. Currently, in this country, the implementation of academic programs in this field demonstrates considerable variation across different regions and conservatories. It is noteworthy that, according to these results, only students specializing in classical voice engage in courses related to stage preparation during their studies, and not all conservatories across the country provide this training as an elective subject for other scholars (Sancho-Andrés, 2023). Furthermore, an exploratory study conducted in the same country, involving 401 students nationwide, revealed that only 38% of participants reported the ability to control their bodies and express themselves effectively during their academic concerts, and 65.8% of respondents indicated that they had not received adequate stage training to perform confidently in public settings (Sancho-Andrés et al., 2025). These findings appear consistent with broader critiques of traditional Western academic music performance education, which is characterized by scholars as a predominantly disembodied and technique-focused model of learning (Fernández-Morante et al., 2021; Ramírez Flores et al., 2024; van der Schyff et al., 2022). From this perspective, rather than representing isolated deficiencies, they reflect broader concerns repeatedly addressed in international literature, such as the need for more holistic approaches capable of enhancing musicians' performance skills, while helping prevent PRMDs and mental health issues (Borgo, 2005; Cruder et al., 2023; Fernández Morante & García Orozco, 2015; Fernández-Morante et al., 2021; Gómez Remolina, 2014; Marzal et al., 2025; Ramírez Flores et al., 2024; Sancho-Andrés et al., 2024; Stanhope, 2016; Williamon, 2012; Zarza Alzugaray et al., 2016).

Taken together, these observations highlight the need to reconsider the educational principles that have historically guided music performance education and to explore alternative pedagogical approaches aligned with contemporary research. Within this context, examining the experiential foundations of recently developed programs such as Musicality of Movement approach (MoM) becomes particularly relevant.

REVIEW LITERATURE

Traditional Western academic music performance education

Conventional pedagogy in conservatories of music has predominantly focused on cultivating instrumental/vocal technical proficiency, often neglecting equally critical aspects such as physical, psychological, personal, and performance-related factors (Fernández-Morante et al., 2021; Fortuny et al., 2025; Ramírez Flores et al., 2024). Within this framework, two distinct dimensions have been identified: the study of music as an object, and the body-mind dichotomy.

Music as an object

Since the early 19th century, music historiography and musicological research have predominantly concentrated on composers and their written works. This focus reflects an understanding of music as an object or thing, a static representation of music-making that encapsulates all meaning within itself rather than a process (Borgo, 2005; Brenscheidt genannt Jost, 2015; Davidson & Correia, 2001; de Assis, 2018; Jensenius, 2024). Moreover, it is essential to consider not only written compositions but also recordings within this context. These recordings are typically regarded as standard; however, they can lead to unrealistic expectations among performers as they are produced in studio settings, benefiting from the expertise of sound engineers (Altenmüller & Jabusch, 2010).

Considering the interplay between composer, score, recordings and performer, the pursuit of excellence among students and educators is a discernible phenomenon. The aforementioned factors have contributed to the establishment of a formal music education system that emphasizes the mastery interpretation of pre-composed scores and the repetition of exercises to achieve this proficiency (Jensenius, 2024; Jorquera Jaramillo, 2002). This situation results in students receiving instruction primarily focused on improving their instrumental/vocal technique, while performance skills are seldom addressed and the body is regarded as a tool trained to perform correctly (McAllister, 2013; van der Schyff et al., 2022). Nonetheless, students cannot achieve success solely through the consumption of textual materials or visual media; rather, they must engage in direct experiential learning (Ismail et al., 2023). Consequently, it becomes increasingly important to investigate alternative pedagogical approaches in music performance education which may shift the focus from acquiring stable, predetermined skills to a broader, creative and less predictable horizon (Schiavio & van der Schyff, 2018).

Dichotomy body and mind

Musical instruction has also been influenced by the dichotomy between the body and mind, representing one of the most challenging legacies of Western culture. This unbalanced perspective prioritizes intellectual and memory-based development over other learning possibilities, including bodily intelligence (Gómez Remolina, 2014).

In line with this dualistic tradition, conservatories of music have frequently offered different training programs targeting either bodily or psychological aspects of musicians' development. In relation to bodily dimensions, Alexander Technique, Feldenkrais Method, Eutony, Body Mapping, Pilates, Gyrotonics, Fedora Aberastury System, Yoga or Tai Chi stand out as notable approaches in this context (Aberastury, 2014; Carman, 2012; Conable, 2000; Duliège, 2011; Fernández Morante & García Orozco, 2015; McAllister, 2013; Sancho-Andrés, 2023; Thomson & Jacque, 2017; Williamon, 2012). In addition, different practices related to psychological dimensions as emotional regulation techniques, Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction, Applied Relaxation Training or imagery, have been adapted for musicians (Dalia Cirujeda, 2004; Fernández Morante & García Orozco, 2015; McAllister, 2013; Rosset i Llobet & Odam, 2010; Sancho-Andrés, 2023; Thomson & Jacque, 2017; Williams & Kabat-Zinn, 2011). However, musical experience reveals that the assumed dichotomy between the body and mind is untenable, as both constitute an inseparable unity (López Cano, 2014). As a result, pedagogies grounded in embodied, relational, and situated forms of learning become essential.

Paradigm shift

Since the late 20th century, the integration of body and mind has emerged as a significant theme in scholarly research, prompting a paradigm shift in music studies that aligns with phenomenological theories of embodied perception and cognition (Kim, 2020; López Cano, 2014; Schiavio & van der Schyff, 2024). Within these frameworks, consciousness is perceived as inherently embodied, establishing embodiment as a fundamental unit of analysis (Battán Horenstein, 2012). Furthermore, even when musicians strictly follow the score, the process of music-making extends beyond the mere replication of notated music, involving dynamic processes of negotiation and adaptation (van der Schyff et al., 2018). In this context, the sensorimotor coupling between the musician and the environment is considered a fundamental component of cognition, as posited by embodied and enactive approaches (Ascione et al., 2019).

Embodied music cognition

The theory of embodied cognition asserts that all forms of human cognition are grounded in physical experience (Ascione et al., 2019; Leman & Maes, 2014). Furthermore, while the traditional disembodied perspective on music cognition considers action and perception as separate, embodied theories highlight the essential integration of these elements, positing that perception inherently induces action tendencies through embodied sensorimotor engagement (Maes et al., 2014; Matyja, 2016; Schiavio & van der Schyff, 2024). In this context, playing a musical instrument is

considered an embodied process, wherein individuals' experiences are interconnected with the musical world generated through their bodily activities (Kim, 2020).

However, although embodied music cognition emphasizes the essential role of the body in musical activity, it does not by itself fully account for the ongoing dynamic process involved in music-making, in which sensorimotor, affective, and cognitive systems interact with the external environment (Leman & Maes, 2014). This adoption of the dynamic systems theory is considered a significant advancement in embodied theories of music cognition, making it an approach frequently employed by enactivists (Schiavio, 2014).

Enactive music approach

Enactive theorists conceptualize the co-arising relationship between organisms and their environments as a circular phenomenon, wherein sense-making involves the mutual influence of all components within the body-brain-world system in a non-linear or recursive manner (van der Schyff et al., 2016, 2022). This perspective positions agents as autonomous entities engaged in the generation of meaning, rather than relegating them to a passive role of obedience (De Jaegher & Di Paolo, 2008; Fuchs & De Jaegher, 2009). In this context, embodied action situates cognitive abilities not towards problem-solving but towards the enactment of a world, creating a narrative that becomes viable through structural coupling. However, it does not need to be optimal, as the interactions involved do not adhere to a predetermined framework (Varela et al., 1997).

In musical contexts, while embodied music cognition conceptualizes the musical mind through representations of musically relevant movements that occur within a cognizing brain, the enactive approach examines the environmentally situated body as a cognitive domain (van der Schyff et al., 2022). Consequently, the dynamic interaction between embodied agents and the musical environment is highlighted through a reevaluation of musical mental representation and the meaningful actions employed (Schiavio, 2014).

The 4E framework

Building upon the previous developments, to effectively describe the complex patterns of reciprocal causation among brains, bodies, and environments, musical cognition has recently been conceptualized as Embodied, Embedded, Extended, and Enactive, collectively known as the 4E (Schiavio & van der Schyff, 2024). As noted by van der Schyff et al. (2018), this approach facilitates the examination of the dynamics inherent in corporeal and ecological dimensions —encompassing social, instrumental, and sonic aspects— within an interconnected, relational framework. According to various scholarly publications (Corintha & Cabral, 2022; Rooney, 2024; Schiavio & van der Schyff, 2018; Silverman, 2020; van der Schyff et al., 2018, 2022; van der Schyff & Schiavio, 2022), each concept within the 4E framework can be delineated as follows:

- Embodied: The perception and execution of music extend beyond brain processes, with motor and affective components playing crucial roles in how musicians simultaneously produce and experience musical sounds.

- Embedded: It refers to how musicians adaptively position themselves within their musical environment, encompassing physical, social and cultural dimensions.

- Extended: It relates to how musicians delegate cognitive processes to other biological entities, non-biological devices, or environmental features to perform various functions that would be unattainable or excessively challenging if reliant solely on the agent's own neural and/or physical capabilities.

- Enactive: It examines how distinct musical identities and environments emerge through the self-organizing activities of musical agents. Furthermore, it explores how these processes continuously shape the relational and creative constraints and how meaning making emerges from adaptive interactivity between agents and environment.

Taken together, the 4E framework offer a valuable conceptual foundation for examining pedagogical approaches that transcend traditional technique-centered and mind-body dualistic models of music performance education (Schiavio & van der Schyff, 2018).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study emerges from the absence of academic research utilizing the 4E framework to examine the educational offerings provided at conservatories of music, and the lack of scholarly investigation about comprehensive training programs for musicians which encompass the integration of body, mind, and space (Bezerra & Fialho, 2023; de Aguiar, 2024; Eğmir et al., 2017; Heile & Iddon, 2024; Herbert & Parkinson, 2025; Jensenius, 2024; Martin & Nielsen, 2024; Paschalidou, 2024, 2025; Rooney, 2024; Schiavio & van der Schyff, 2024). To address this gap, this article focuses on Musicality of Movement approach (MoM), which, despite its recent development and limited exploration to date, has been recognized as a comprehensive training for musicians seeking to enhance their musical performance and stage presence (Sancho-Andrés et al., 2023). Consequently, and given the necessity of establishing its foundational knowledge, the primary aim of this study is to elucidate the experiential ontology of MoM in dialogue with the 4E framework. To accomplish this primary aim, the following specific ones may be pursued:

- Describe the constitutive dimensions of MoM as formulated by its developer Virág Dezsö (VD).

- Examine the alignment of MoM with the 4E framework based on VD’s lived account.

METHOD

Within educational research, phenomenology has been widely employed to explore how participants make sense of their lived experiences and attribute meaning to educational processes, thereby bridging the gap between education research and practice (Akdağ Kurnaz & Arı, 2024; Bayir et al., 2022; Joubert & Van der Merwe, 2020). In this context, and considering the primary aim of this study, Giorgi's descriptive phenomenological method was identified as the most suitable methodological approach for its development. Initially, since MoM was recognized as an innovative training program for musicians but without an in-depth and detailed understanding (Sancho-Andrés et al., 2023), it was deemed necessary to adopt a phenomenological approach

that avoided restrictive theoretical frameworks, as contemplated by Husserl (Martínez Miguélez, 2004). Secondly, because Giorgi's descriptive phenomenological method, while rooted in Husserl's assumptions, diverges by altering the implementation of its procedural steps deriving its results from external sources rather than from researchers themselves, thus grounding the analysis in the phenomenon itself (Giorgi et al., 2017).

The data collection instrument employed was an in-depth phenomenological interview, characterized as qualitative, semi-structured, and inspired by ethnography (Høffding et al., 2022). It was conducted with the developer of MoM (VD) who was intentionally selected as the sole informant due to the study's primary aim of exploring the experiential and pedagogical foundations of the approach. The script, which contained seventy-two open-ended questions, received approval from a panel of experts, whose insights contributed to the refinement of certain previously mentioned questions. Owing to scheduling constraints and the duration of the interview, the first author conducted it in four separate sessions. The initial three meetings were held via Teams, with the first occurring on August 31, 2024, and the other two on November 1, 2024. The final session took place in person on June 25, 2025, at Studio MAPA Nederland. All sessions were recorded in both video and audio formats to ensure the availability of backups.

The entire interview, which lasted for six hours, was transcribed verbatim. During the initial session, a draft transcript was generated in real-time using Teams. However, in subsequent online sessions, it was determined that the Teams draft contained numerous errors, rendering it unsuitable. Consequently, the backup audio recording was utilized to obtain draft transcriptions using Microsoft Word. This software was also employed for the audio recording of the face-to-face interview. Finally, all draft transcripts were meticulously reviewed by cross-referencing with the video recordings to identify any errors, organize the content, and document significant VD gestures.

The complete interview was examined in accordance with the five-step process delineated by Giorgi et al. (2017) utilizing Atlas.ti 25. Meaning units were identified and subsequently transformed into phenomenological expressions, with analytical labels assigned to them within the software not as thematic ones, but as organizational tools. To systematically organize them while preserving phenomenological distinction, three structural dimensions of meaning were established. By adopting a stance of phenomenological reduction, preliminary analytical labels were integrated during a second review based on their eidetic relevance to the constitution of the phenomenon (Table 1).

Table 1
Structural dimensions of meaning and integration of analytical labels

	Preliminary analytical labels (n)	Final analytical labels (n)
Epistemological Orientation	13	9
Constitutive Principles	26	14
Academic Implementation	14	8
TOTAL	53	31

The Epistemological Orientation dimension includes transformed meanings that do not pertain to VD's personal characteristics or educational background. Instead, they relate

to how she conceptualizes her knowledge, the process through which it is generated and validated, and the role her experience and the world play in that process. Regarding Constitutive Principles, these emerge from the transformed meanings associated with all practices and underlying processes through which MoM is constituted. In turn, the Academic Implementation integrates the transformed meanings related to pedagogical development, ongoing adaptation, and curricular implementation of MoM.

Finally, following the progressive integration of transformed meanings, a description of the experiential ontology of MoM was developed. In this endeavor, Paperpal Prime was employed to assist in composing this article in academic English, ChatGPT provided support in clarifying questions that emerged concerning the phenomenological transformations of meaning during the interview analysis, and RefWorks Citation Manager was utilized to incorporate citations within the text.

Ethical considerations

The research project, of which this study is a component, received approval from the Ethics Committee of the University of A Coruña under the code 2024-008. Virág Dezsö, the developer of MoM, was requested to review the project's information sheet and was thoroughly informed about the necessity of disclosing her identity, as it is crucial to identify the creator of MoM. She signed a comprehensive informed consent form, acknowledging her right to withdraw from the research at any time. Prior to the publication of this article, VD's excerpts from the interview were forwarded to her for review, to ensure her agreement with their publication.

FINDINGS

The experiential foundation of MoM can be traced in the developmental trajectory of its creator (VD) characterized by sustained engagement with practice-based learning and lived understanding of the body as a primary source of knowledge. Although previously trained in gymnastics, dance, and music, VD's development as modern mime has exerted a significant influence on her. This development reflects an epistemological inquiry related to movement, which she has pursued since an early age and first explored through her initial engagement with Movement Theater:

> He didn't start from the music and then, finding the movement go match with the music. He started from content to look for the expression in the different movements. It was not about aesthetics, but it was about meaning, and that was very different.

This orientation is closely linked to VD's understanding of movement as deeply rooted in the intrinsic meaning of the term in her native language: "Hungarian *mozdulat* is never used for an object […] is linked with emotions and thoughts and the inner inspiration and motivation." On this basis, the body is understood in MoM not as an instrument or an object, but as a living and continuously changing organism that requires ongoing attunement and adaptation as the foundation of expressive practice:

> It's not about dance, it's movement. Movement which doesn't deal with aesthetics […] is looking for a deep connection and the expressivity of the body itself. And the

> authenticity of each person. And it doesn't deal with technique and the technical requirements.

Accordingly, MoM aims to cultivate psychophysical unity as an integral aspect through lived training practice: "You just need to experience bodily. And then, it will also come up to your understanding in your mind. But first let the brain out and let the body be." In turn, this process supports the development of intuition as a pre-reflective, bodily form of knowing grounded in experience.

Through this process, different forms of awareness are cultivated within MoM. Rather than being explicitly taught, they are gradually differentiated through sustained engagement with practice and the alternation between participants lived experiences and their reflective observations. This experiential process, as described by VD, enables the emergence of a deeper understanding, which participants can articulate progressively. In turn, it contributes to the enhancement of their intuition, self-image and self-confidence:

> It starts with the body awareness and then it opens up to the spatial awareness. […] When you come […] so far that you trust yourself. Then, you open up the awareness of others around. And what I said to filter the different information, so the different senses […] Which is also being aware of the space through what you see, or being aware through what you hear, or being aware through what you sense. So, what speaks louder? We rely most of the time on what we see. That's the strongest. I want to balance it on the way that I want to really open up the physical awareness. Important to being aware of my body but sense the other ones. And being aware of the space. And how do I sense, and how am I aware of timing passing?

The experiential focus on awareness within MoM is sustained through exercises that avoid extreme physical demands, instead prioritizing flexibility and adaptability grounded in body and physical memory. Exercises drawn from other training programs are used as sources of inspiration rather than prescriptive models. These exercises are adapted in accordance with VD's ongoing pedagogical search, with modern mime serving as a fundamental source of influence. Within this practice, breathing is a crucial element, with various types systematically connected to different actions. As VD describes, this association enables diverse intentions and interpretations of the same action whenever the breathing is modified, thereby establishing a connection with musicality and facilitating the discovery of how internal music can be manifested through articulated movement in space.

> Breathing exercises are also very important. Because it also helps to connect. And to come to musicality, the sense of musicality. And I'm talking about not only musicality in a piece, written music piece. But the musicality in the whole being. How I walk on stage, it has musicality. Even the way I am standing, it has musicality. Everything. The space itself, how it's set up, it has a rhythm, it has dynamics, it has its music.

As expressed by VD, the experiential process through which musicality arises from the interplay between breath and action facilitates internal emotional engagement, rather

than relying on external stimuli, resulting in a comprehensive physical experience. Alongside this experiential work, partner and group exercises based on listening foster a distinct form of interpersonal connection and collaboration, requiring all participants strive to achieve equilibrium between themselves and their surrounding environment. In this sense, listening extends beyond auditory information to include corporeal and spatial perception and musicality expands to physical interaction, constituted through the interrelation of performers, space and sound. Furthermore, temporal perception is trained as an embodied capacity, enabling performers to inhabit and sustain a given duration through practice rather than through external control or calculation. Alongside, when these dimensions are integrated and musical instruments are incorporated into practice within MoM, they become part of the experience itself:

> Then when I see the moment, I can bring in the instruments […] it is leading towards the final round or situation when everybody is playing through space, physically […] Meaning that we can listen through the sound we create, the music we create. So, there is a dialogue through what we hear, but then implementing all the physical experiences, meaning that they are able to also listen through the body and space. And then, the composition in will be not only based on the audible information, what musicians are used to, but what is happening at the moment in physically. So, what is the relation between the performers, the performers in space, and how it is all related to the sound. So, everything intertwines.

Within this experiential process, performative improvisations provide a context in which spatial work becomes active. This practice takes place within MoM with clearly defined parameters that provide orientation, allowing participants to remain grounded in the present moment while engaging with the unfolding path: "It trains you to be flexible and creative in a way. And not to be afraid of differences but find the solution in doing." This work, as described by VD, is experienced as fostering creativity and playfulness while simultaneously cultivating confidence in one's intuition and abilities. It also creates an environment where concerns about mistakes diminish, as there is no compulsion for perfection, thereby facilitating a more open and enjoyable form of collective music-making. These practices can be experienced with repertoire; however, participants often endeavor to explore alternative modes of expression through their instruments:

> They are welcome and they do, especially those who want to stay safe. They bring in what they know. But slowly on, with the different exercises, they dare to leave that in, and they dare to experiment with different qualities, what they can even bring out of an instrument. And that leads to also the freedom that they can compose together in the moment. Because the important is that there is no pressure to make it right.

Consequently, as this process unfolds, confidence and intuitive action gradually emerge, enabling collective creation in the present moment by releasing fixation on outcomes and allowing multiple pathways to emerge through lived experience: "I can have a goal, to know where I want to end up. But I need to let that go in order to experience the path. And then perhaps I find different ways to end up there."

DISCUSSION

The findings suggest that MoM is underpinned by an experiential epistemology in which movement functions not merely as a pedagogical tool but as a primary source of inquiry and learning. In this context, rather than treating the body as a vehicle for implementing previously acquired knowledge, MoM appears to conceptualize bodily experience as the very ground from which understanding emerges. This perspective challenges traditional conceptions of musical instruction, which focus predominantly on explicit knowledge transmission and the pursuit of technical mastery, often characterized by scholars as disembodied (Fernández-Morante et al., 2021; Fortuny et al., 2025; Jensenius, 2024; Ramírez Flores et al., 2024; van der Schyff et al., 2022). In contrast, MoM is consistent with embodied cognition perspectives, which reject mind-body dualism and emphasize the essential role of the body in a world that is revealed through it (Kim, 2020; van der Schyff et al., 2022; Thomson & Jacque, 2017).

Beyond this embodied dimension, MoM appears to cultivate pre-reflective forms of knowing that emerge through experience and reflective observation. The development of intuition, together with bodily, spatial, sensory, relational, and temporal awareness, suggest a progressive expansion of the performer's experiential horizon, opening possibilities for more situated and relational forms of engagement with the environment, a key feature of enactive approaches to cognition (De Jaegher & Di Paolo, 2008; Silverman, 2020; Schiavio & van der Schyff, 2024).

This expansion of awareness also appears to transform the way musicality is understood within MoM. Rather than being externally prescribed, it emerges through the dynamic interplay between breath and action. Through this process, emotional engagement develops from embodied participation itself, giving rise to an integrated physical experience. Such a view resonates with embodied and enactive perspectives, in which meaning, affect, and action are understood as mutually constitutive dimensions of experience (De Jaegher & Di Paolo, 2008; Fuchs & De Jaegher, 2009; Maes et al., 2014; Matyja, 2016; Schiavio & van der Schyff, 2024).

This understanding of musicality further expands beyond the individual performer. Through listening-based relational practices, MoM cultivates bodily, spatial, and interpersonal attunement, suggesting that musicality also emerges through the dynamic interaction of performers, space, and sound. Together with the cultivation of temporal perception, this view is consistent with embedded accounts of cognition, which emphasize the ongoing interplay between the performer and the environment, challenging distinctions between internal and external sources of meaning. From this view, cognition is not confined within the performer but co-determined by the ecological contexts in which musical activity takes place (Rooney, 2024; Schiavio, 2014; van der Schyff et al., 2022).

Through the integration of these dimensions within MoM, musical instruments become part of the performers' experiential field rather than external objects that need to be controlled. Musical action consequently emerges through the interaction of performers, instruments, space, and sound, a view consistent with extended accounts of cognition, which understand cognitive processes as distributed across individuals and the material

resources involved in action (Corintha & Cabral, 2022; Rooney, 2024; Schiavio & van der Schyff, 2024; Silverman, 2020; van der Schyff et al., 2022).

Building on this distributed mode of musical engagement, performative improvisations in space within MoM provide a structured yet open framework in which participants learn to respond to emerging situations through action. Creativity, flexibility, intuition, and self-confidence are cultivated through active engagement with unfolding circumstances, while concerns about error and performing correctly are progressively displaced. These experiences contrasts with traditional models of music performance education, which have often emphasized technical accuracy striving for perfection (Fernández-Morante et al., 2021; Jensenius, 2024; Ramírez Flores et al., 2024; van der Schyff et al., 2022). In contrast, MoM resonates with enactive perspectives, which understand cognition as emerging through adaptive interaction with the environment rather than through the execution of pre-established plans (Schiavio, 2014; van der Schyff et al., 2016, 2022; Varela et al., 1997).

CONCLUSIONS

This study has explored the experiential ontology of MoM as articulated by its developer (VD) through descriptive phenomenological analysis. The findings reveal that MoM is grounded on a coherent set of constitutive principles aligned with VD's epistemological orientation and is conceived as an adaptive, process-oriented form of training. Furthermore, the findings indicate that MoM engages all core dimensions of the 4E approach. In doing so, MoM may broaden pedagogical possibilities within conservatories of music by presenting an innovative program aimed at supporting musicians' holistic development and preparation for performance.

Nevertheless, further research is needed as this study is solely based on the perspective of VD. It is therefore suggested to incorporate the perspective of students to examine how this experiential ontology is lived and articulated by participants. Additionally, a detailed exploration of MoM exercises would elucidate how its experiential principles are implemented in practice.

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