**Introduction:**

A very common piece of musical advice, handed down from generation to generation of young musicians, is that notes do not matter as much as sound (meaning, timbre). This statement holds incredible implications, especially in the realm of improvised music, where the musician is at once both the interpreter and composer of the music itself, where the musician is at once both performer and composer. And yet, despite the incredible importance we accord to the topic of timbre, we lack any relevant amount of practical information on it — in the sense that the few tools that we do have at our disposal for the study of timbre, deriving from physical studies of vibrations and acoustics, although central to many aspects of music making, are not really of much use in informing the musician’s performance, as they in no way relate to the embodied aspect of music making. It is not, in other words, through the understanding of the principles of vibrational physics that Bill Evans learned how to produce his ideal sound on the piano by pushing his fingers onto the keys a certain way, eliciting a certain action of the hammer upon the string, the vibration of which would result in a specific spectre of harmonics, causing a certain timbre to perceived. The body is not a passive element in the process of music-making, as it gives form to the musical idea. Extended matter and time are necessary forms for any phonic event, in virtue of the vibrational nature of sound itself, which is defined through the parameters of amplitude and frequency. Humans create music by interacting with extended matter and causing in it movement over time, and for the most part they do so in macroscopic and abstract ways, using abductions made from practical experience as their guides. An understanding of the true nature of timbre then, I argue, should stem from a sympathetic method of analysis, appealing to the body as a tool for musical analysis.

**Sounding Bodies:**

It is clear that it is individual physical actions of sound production that constitute the starting point of musical ideas, whose only prerogative is to give them a syntax (of indifferent coherency) and organisation. The objects of this organisation however, we should remember, are not abstract ideas of vibration or pitch, but concrete physical experiences with physical consequences that result in a certain sound being produced. The fact that it is so means that in sound there is no meaning of a linguistic or rational kind (a fact that seems to a certain degree in contrast with the way music is conceptualised and taught today), but that sound is itself — physically and conceptually — shaped after the body and the instrument that has produced it. This “*body in the singing voice, in the writing hand, in the performing limb”*, as Barthes would call it (Barthes, *Image, Music, Text*,276)*,*I argue, ought to be one of the focal points of our conception of music, as music itself is constituted by it just as much as it is by reason and psyche.

But “*The ‘grain’ of the voice is not,*he warns us, *— or not only —its timbre; the* *signifying it affords cannot be better defined than by the friction between music and something else, which is the language (and not the message at all)*”.

**Finding One’s Voice:**

**Interplay:**

**Timbric Virtuosity:**

**Conclusion:**