Music as Movement in Signed Song: Analyzing Rosa Lee Timm's "River Song"

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Abstract for
Music as Movement in Signed Song: Analyzing Rosa Lee Timm's "River Song"

by Anabel Maler, *SMT-V* 11.1

Music created and performed primarily in a visual-kinesthetic or tactile modality, such as signed music, presents important challenges for our existing methodologies and paradigms in the field of music theory. The existence of music that does not necessarily involve sounds prompts us to reconceptualize music in terms of organized movement, and to consider how musical parameters such as vocal quality, melody, and rhythm can emerge in a visual-kinesthetic musical medium. This video considers these parameters through a detailed analysis of the original signed song "River Song," composed and performed by Rosa Lee Timm. The video uses music analysis and video interviews with Timm to reveal the meaning of a purely signed piece of music.

Short Keyword List

Deafness; Sign language; Movement; ASL; Music Analysis

Extensive Keyword List

Deafness; Deaf; Deaf Studies; sign language; American Sign Language; ASL; sign language music; music theory; music analysis; disability

About the Author

Anabel Maler is an Assistant Professor of Music Theory at the University of British Columbia. She received her PhD from the University of Chicago in 2018, where she completed a dissertation titled "Hearing Form in Post-Tonal Music." Her research on sign language, Deafness, disability, and music has appeared in journals such as *Music Theory Online*, *Music Perception*, and the *Journal of the Society for American Music*. Her co-authored publication, "Rhythmic Techniques in Deaf Hip Hop" received the 2021 Adam Krims award from the Society for Music Theory. She previously taught at the University of Iowa and Indiana University.

Filmography

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