



Musical Forces: Motion, Metaphor, and Meaning in Music (Musical Meaning and Interpretation)

By Steve Larson

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Steve Larson drew on his 20 years of research in music theory, cognitive linguistics, experimental psychology, and artificial intelligence—as well as his skill as a jazz pianist—to show how the experience of physical motion can shape one's musical experience. Clarifying the roles of analogy, metaphor, grouping, pattern, hierarchy, and emergence in the explanation of musical meaning, Larson explained how listeners hear tonal music through the analogues of physical gravity, magnetism, and inertia. His theory of melodic expectation goes beyond prior theories in predicting complete melodic patterns. Larson elegantly demonstrated how rhythm and meter arise from, and are given meaning by, these same musical forces.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Musical Forces: Motion, Metaphor, and Meaning in Music will find a ready place in academic collections supporting study in advanced theory and musical cognition. It is well written, easy to understand, and full of good examples. The introduction by itself is a fine survey of the dialogue concerning musical meaning. By giving such an introduction, Larson's theories may well be understood as a part of an ongoing discussion." ?Music Reference Services Quarterly

"Musical Forces presents an original and important theory of melody, centered on the idea that we experience musical motion metaphorically through our experience of physical motion. The study sheds new light on musical expectation, compositional practice, and the role of metaphor in musical experience and discourse. Musical Forces is a major contribution to musical scholarship." ?David Temperley, Eastman School of Music

"One can read between the lines that the publication of this book was a labor-of-love for Editor Robert S. Hatten, who describes it as 'a fitting memorial to his (Steve Larson's) visionary ideas, his love of music, and his passion for sharing both.'" ?TRIANGLE MAGAZINE

"Musical Forces provides an authoritative yet accessible treatment of a topic that lies at the core of the emotional experience of music: the intuition of forces that tug, pull, and resolve melodic motion. Lay listeners and professionals alike have much to learn from this important contribution to music theory and psychology." ?Fred Lerdahl, Fritz Reiner Professor of Music, Columbia University

"The potential benefits of Larson's theory of musical forces include a more explicit understanding of how we make meaning from musical experience, which in turn includes a richer understanding of the aspects of music cognition and metaphoric reasoning...." ?Music Theory Online

"It's hard to talk about music without using the language of motion... Steve Larson thoughtfully integrates several seemingly disparate disciplinary threads in music theory and cognitive science in an attempt to understand why we experience music this way. His account places three musical forces?gravity, magnetism, and inertia?at the center of the explanation." ?Music Perception

"Steve Larson distinguishes between thinking in music and thinking about music, and it is clear from his final opus that he did both very well. With striking originality, this book reconciles "conflicts" between music-cognitive principles and Schenkerian music analysis, and shows how metaphors and physical embodiment inform our musical expectations. This book may change what you think about how music moves." ?Elizabeth West Marvin, Professor of Music Theory, Eastman School of Music and Brain & Cognitive Sciences, University of Rochester

About the Author

Steve Larson (1955-2011) was the Robert M. Trotter Professor of Music at the University of Oregon and a member of its Institute of Cognitive and Decision Sciences. He was author of *Analyzing Jazz: A Schenkerian Approach*.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Clarence Hamm:

Musical Forces: Motion, Metaphor, and Meaning in Music (Musical Meaning and Interpretation) can be one of your nice books that are good idea. We recommend that straight away because this guide has good vocabulary that may increase your knowledge in words, easy to understand, bit entertaining but still delivering the information. The article author giving his/her effort to set every word into joy arrangement in writing Musical Forces: Motion, Metaphor, and Meaning in Music (Musical Meaning and Interpretation) although doesn't forget the main place, giving the reader the hottest as well as based confirm resource details that maybe you can be among it. This great information can certainly drawn you into completely new stage of crucial contemplating.

Julia Faulkner:

This Musical Forces: Motion, Metaphor, and Meaning in Music (Musical Meaning and Interpretation) is great e-book for you because the content which can be full of information for you who all always deal with world and have to make decision every minute. That book reveal it info accurately using great plan word or we can say no rambling sentences inside it. So if you are read the idea hurriedly you can have whole details in it. Doesn't mean it only offers you straight forward sentences but tricky core information with lovely delivering sentences. Having Musical Forces: Motion, Metaphor, and Meaning in Music (Musical Meaning and Interpretation) in your hand like finding the world in your arm, data in it is not ridiculous just one. We can say that no book that offer you world in ten or fifteen small right but this guide already do that. So , this is certainly good reading book. Hey there Mr. and Mrs. busy do you still doubt that will?

Mac Cutter:

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Tamela Campbell:

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