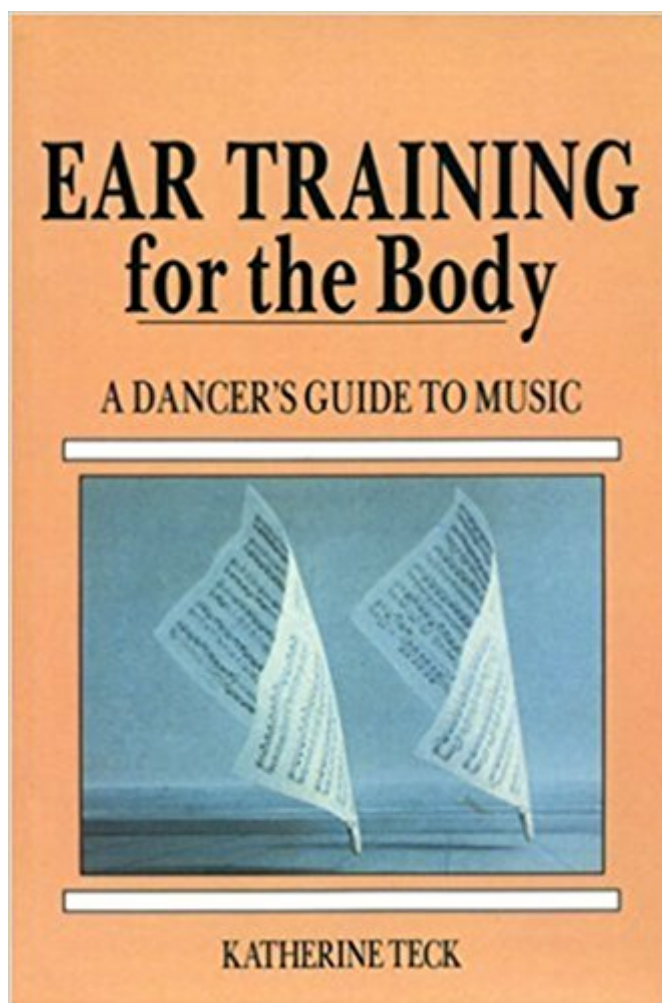


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# Ear Training For The Body: A Dancer's Guide To Music



## Synopsis

An approach to music from the dancer's viewpoint, this book offers a two-part exploration of music as it relates to dance, beginning with an introduction to aspects of musicality that dancers and other music lovers can explore and put into practice immediately.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Katherine Teck is the author of *Movement to Music: Musicians in the Dance Studio* and *Music for the Dance: Reflections on a Collaborative Art*.

Good quality. Come about the time they estimated it would come.

This book, written for the aspiring professional dancer and choreographer, can also be read profitably by anyone interested in dance. The goal of the book is to get dancers to improve their listening skills and gain a broader understanding of musical concepts and notation. Most importantly, it encourages the dancer to explore new ideas connecting movement with sound. The author recognizes however that dance need not always be done to music, citing the great Doris Humphrey's "Water Study" as an example. The book is very insightful and has much to say about the relation between dance and music. In attempting to define "musicality" the author emphasizes the enumerable different ways that music and movement can be related. Movement need not be done "with the music", it may be contrary to the music, and act "against" it. She details how

choreographers view music and its use in dance and in dance class. Assignments are given at the end of each chapter to illustrate and extend the main points. Body percussion is introduced as a tool to understand musical percussion patterns as actually done via instruments. The author emphasizes that dancers can improvise on the spot just like most drummers do. The difference between dancer's counts and musician's counts are discussed, and dancers must learn to do both, according to the author. She draws on the knowledge and experience of some of the eminent choreographers on notions of musicality, counting, and how the dancer should relate to music. Choreographers are encouraged to collaborate with musicians and the author details the methods of collaboration. Interestingly, one of these is for the choreographer to put together the movement and videotape it, letting the composer have complete freedom to choose the music. The collaboration between Martha Graham, Louis Horst, and Erick Hawkins is discussed in detail as an example of a very successful collaboration. The chapter entitled "Sounds and Silences" emphasizes the importance of silent breaks in music. Balanchine's use of Stravinsky is quoted as an example of the unique use of silence in dance. A very brief discussion of the physics of sound is given. Good technical overviews of music dynamics and timing are given in the book, and the author is very aware of the physical effects of sound that must be dealt with in giving a performance in a large auditorium. The terminology of music dynamics is defined in detail, as well as the notion of attack and decay, with the latter being described in physics terms. A very good overview is given of string articulations and dynamic accents. The use of the metronome to keep time is discussed and the author details time signatures, bar lines, and measures. By far the most important discussion of this part is the one on syncopation, for this can be exploited very imaginatively by the dancer. Rhythmic patterns are discussed using graphical methods, and the notion of polyrhythm, where more than one rhythmic pattern is occurring at the same time, is discussed. A lengthy list is given of the more popular social dance rhythms. The notion of pitch is also related to the physics of sound along with consonance and dissonance. The different types of scales, namely diatonic, pentatonic, and whole-tone, are discussed briefly with short musical scores given as examples. Harmony is defined as a "vertical dimension" in music, i.e. the use of simultaneous basic scale pitches. The circle of fifths is discussed also in a section on tonality. Such technical considerations in music are geared primarily to the choreographer reader, particularly the discussions on timbre and score reading. The author also is careful to discuss non-Western musical constructions, all in relation to dance forms. One good example of this is the discussion on the Raga and Tala classical Indian procedures. There is also a brief discussion of more "exotic" phrasing structures such as 7/8 and 18/8 meters. In addition, the author gives a thorough treatment of sectional forms in dance, the AABB, ABA,

AABBCCAB, etc. A list of "10 commandments" for communicating with musicians in class and rehearsal is given.

I am using this book as a text in my Rhythmic Analysis class for dance majors at ULL. It has an accessible approach to learning about music, does not get too bogged down with music theory, and addresses issues particular to dancers. An excellent book, full of stimulating ideas to use in class.

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