

Music and the Body in Greek and Roman Antiquity

MOISA Annual Conference

29-31 July 2015

Newcastle University (UK)

Music is an activity of the body: of breath and lips and teeth, of fingers and arms and stamping feet. The body's organs are instruments of music and dance, and the manufactured instruments (*organa*) which extend the range of musical sounds humans can naturally produce are also extensions of the body. The musical instrument is also construed as a body in its own right (a lyre has 'arms'; an aulos has a 'tongue'), and as a machine assembled from parts of non-human bodies (carapace, reed, gut, wood). Instrumental performance reshapes the human body according to the physical and acoustical properties of the instrument, and this reshaping has been a rich zone of interaction between visual and musical culture: the performing musician is an image of decorum or depravity, of grace or ugliness, of attraction or repulsion, of restraint or licence.

Greek and Roman literature and art offer a wealth of reflections on the relationship between musical activity and the body; and medical writers often exploit musical theories in the context of their own studies of human physiology and health. We invite proposals of no more than 300 words for 30-minute papers in English or Italian on any aspect of this topic, including its later receptions. Specific areas might include the following, among others:

- dance, gesture and other bodily movements in ancient musical culture
- costumes, dress, masks & the visual culture of musical performance
- gender, sexuality and the perception or representation of the performer's body
- body, soul, harmony and proportion in ancient views on music-making
- voice and instrument in moralising discourse on musical uses of the body
- music, the body of the individual and the body of the community
- music, magic and the control of the body
- bodily responses to music
- uses of musicological concepts and ideas in the works of medical writers
- music and the care of the body: e.g. therapy, incubation ritual

MOISA members are welcome to propose papers on other areas of Greek and Roman music or its cultural heritage.

Proposals should be sent to <david.creese@newcastle.ac.uk> by 20 February 2015.

Conference organising committee:

Andrew Barker (Birmingham)

David Creese (Newcastle)

John Franklin (Vermont)

Pauline LeVen (Yale)

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Angelo Meriani (Salerno)

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