



EVELYN GLENNIE |
SOUND ENGINEERING
QUESTIONS

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In your TED talk, you describe how you perceive sound through other parts of your body as a resonating chamber rather than your ears. Is this perception drastically altered by different rooms and surfaces – e.g how do carpets or concrete surfaces affect you?3

If you are playing on a concrete stage is there anything the sound engineers working with you can do to help? Would having a wedge monitor make any difference? Or a resonating platform?3

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Does Front Of House amplification for the audience interfere with your perception of what’s happening on stage as the audio is no longer localised on the individual players? For better or worse?5

In your TED talk, you describe how you perceive sound through other parts of your body as a resonating chamber rather than your ears. Is this perception drastically altered by different rooms and surfaces – e.g how do carpets or concrete surfaces affect you?

Yes, definitely. The size of the rooms, materials around the room, quality of stage, size/depth of stage, placement of instruments, quality of instruments, what one is wearing, shoes or no shoes, how many other players are on stage, audience presence/numbers, temperature and ultimately one's own concentration. There are so many variables that I never feel the same instrument in the same space the same way. Outdoor venues strip everything away as regards to feeling the natural sound of the instruments unless heavily amplified.

If you are playing on a concrete stage is there anything the sound engineers working with you can do to help? Would having a wedge monitor make any difference? Or a resonating platform?

Carpets, concrete and stone floorings are not so helpful as regards to digesting sound in the lower part of the body. Resonating platforms are very helpful but often impractical for the amount of instruments (and weight) that I often have. I have never had a resonating platform the size needed for

my general set up of instruments and it's not so practical when playing concertos whereby my instruments are at the front of an orchestra.

Sound engineers can help in certain situations. If I'm playing a recital using multi percussion with my pianist or performing with one or other instrumentalists then wedges can help as they act as a security blanket but ultimately it's visually seeing the musicians that is key.

Is it possible to describe how you perceive the click track?

The type of sound/frequency of the click is crucial as is the volume. This is both heard and felt above the myriad of frequencies coming from my percussion. The click is felt in a part of the body (head) that doesn't easily digest or at least make sense of the vibrations coming from my instruments. As I physically have to move a lot when playing, often from instrument to instrument, the click is the one constant that remains in the same part of the body no matter where or when I'm moving.

Do you ever use a click with other musicians? What situations are they most required in?

Yes, sometimes I use a click for composing music for media purposes such as film music/library music where something has to be exact or layered/overdubbed. I used it in 2018 with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra of Motown songs arranged for solo percussion, orchestra, and a core band of drums, keyboards and guitars. We all had a click, including the conductor, but the orchestral players did not. A click was used for when I played the 'And I Will Kiss' and 'Caliban's Dream' at the London 2021 Olympic Opening Ceremony. A click is used in some of my recital pieces for solo percussion and audio tape as well as a recital piece for solo percussion and piano with backing orchestral audio tape. There have been several other scenarios in the past too.

Does Front Of House amplification for the audience interfere with your perception of what's happening on stage as the audio is no longer localised on the individual players? For better or worse?

That depends on the quality of sound, equipment, the engineer, mixing, what kind of music it is and how familiar I might be with the situation. I have been in scenarios whereby it has been challenging and confusing sound

wise and other times when it has felt comfortable. It's important to have time to adjust to a situation and sadly that's not always available.

If you have any more questions, take a look at the range of student booklets we have available divided into topic sections. Still can't find what you're looking for? Email pr@evelyn.co.uk with your questions.

Where to find Evelyn?



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