

A musical interpretation of contraction and release.

## Correspondence Author

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Konstantina Kapsouli

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## Abstract

The objective of this paper is to explore the methods through which I musicalise the dance of contraction and release, with particular focus on the exercises of spirals and pleadings. These techniques are embodied in a new composition for harp and piano, titled Descent into a Spiral Dance, which highlights key elements of the dance: the shape of the dancer's body and the relationship between its parts, especially the opposition between the spine and the core.

The main research questions that this study is concerned with are

- In what ways can contraction and release be translated into music?
- What are the musical devices that correlate to the core elements of spirals and pleadings?
- In what ways can music represent the shapes of spirals and pleadings?
- In what ways can music imprint the opposition between spine and core?

The method used to investigate this topic is practice as research. The practice informed the process and decisions, through collaboration and devising with the dancers and musicians. The reflection upon this process led to new findings that moved the research forward. The main findings of this composition are the musical devices that can effectively represent the dance elements that interest this study and performance ways of enhancing the compositional ideas.

These findings are of significant contribution to my research but also to contemporary compositional methods. This study also contributes to the theoretical and practical promotion of choreomusicological studies, which are concerned with the relationship between music and dance, which have been neglected especially when it comes to practice.

## Keywords

Dance, Musical interpretation