

# Acousmatics an introduction creative writing sample

[Technology](#), [Development](#)



Please write about sound art and experimental sound. specifically acousmatics. focus on that subject and please do some research. I will attach two readings but please include outside sources. this paper should be more about content and not form . My background I am from saudi arabia and i haven't been exposed to material like experimental sound before.. please elaborate on that or add it as an example. make it a bit personal if you may. thanks

Acousmatics is the study of experimental sounds which may be blended together to form a sort of music. This can come in various shapes and guises but principally it involves the strumming together of musical sounds which can at first seem to be slightly out of kilter with normality but which provide a range of sounds which can be termed as music. Famous exponents of the art of acousmatics include Karlheinz Stockhausen, Luciano Berio and other composers from the modern age who have focused on the art of creating sound from nothing.

Acousmatics could also be described as a kind as a sonorous ambiguity which may focus also upon specific cultures in this respect. In this sense acousmatics could also include the sounds of more traditionalist instruments such as the Arabian pipe combined with others such as the xylophone or electric piano which are decidedly more modern.

However acousmatics has also been compared with other sounds such as film music where the actual sound heard by the listener is the one which affects the hearing alone. This is a theory which was expounded at length by the French musician Pierre Schaeffer who explained that sounds were actually what one heard and were not directly related to music. This can

perhaps be described if one listens to the music of Philip Glass where the acoustic experimentation focuses principally on the relaxed sounds which the ear may hear or distinguish accordingly.

Acousmatics has also been described as the art of sound in the way that sound is intrinsically painted in this respect and demonstrates itself as being part and parcel of proceedings. Although sound cannot be basically put to rest as a term, acousmatics also describes the way other people relate to sound in their hearing and their projection. It is hard to explain what the sounds can actually mean but one can observe certain reactions during films as a typical example when a particular sound creates a reaction which is startling.

Thus there is an inextricable link between how one hears things and how these are processed in the brain. Although this is arguably the study of psychology, one may also note that the acoustic sounds which come out of certain instruments have a sort of therapeutic effect and this will certainly mean that they have an effect on how the brain works. Thus acousmatics can also be found during surgical procedures where for example some surgeons use the music of Mozart to soothe the patient who is under the anaesthetic but subconsciously the mind will still be working and will also be focused on certain aspects of learning.

Content of acousmatics:

Rock music can be termed as acousmatics as the sounds created by electric guitars, snare drums and suchlike all affect the mind in a specific way. This is true even in the most complex of rock songs where acousmatics can seem to be a far cry to what is needed but this is actually what is being heard.

Another form of acousmatics is the leitmotif in classical music which was used by Richard Wagner several times in his tetralogy of operas called 'The Ring', Here Wagner skilfully interwove themes from the opera with certain characters thus making the audience identify with these characters all the time. Thus, the music was consistently identified with a certain character or personality.

### **Acousmatics in rock music**

Although acousmatics may not be intrinsically connected to rock music there are several bands who have used this style to portray a certain sense of the art of sound.

For example I would like to write about a few bands in this essay and also wish to know more about them. Take the band Iron maiden for example which is probably one of the most popular ever and which was discussed extensively throughout the course. Iron Maiden with Steve Harris, Paul diAnno and Adrian Murray were truly a great band in the early 1980's and created albums such as Killers and Iron Miaden itself. The songs on these albums such as The Phantom of the Opera were crucial to my development as a rock critic and musician. The course helped me understand what these albums really meant for the development of rock and how all this came together in one fell swoop. All these albums contain songs which can have acousmatic tendencies and which demonstrate that there can be inextricable links with such forms of art.

Another album which was part of the sources which were discussed during the course was The Number of the Beast. This is an album which includes a classic theme song such as Hallowed be thy Name that truly describes the

band and their capabilities for riffs and other rock tricks. Perhaps Iron Maiden also have other songs which may thrill much more to the core such as the ones in the latter part of their career with Bruce Dickinson but to my mind this particular track is truly top notch and was really an intriguing part of our free sources.

Another band which I really enjoyed listening to and learning about was Metallica. From my early years, I have been a huge fan of this band and the ability to sample several of their albums throughout the course was one of the top qualities of the said course. Albums such as Master of Puppets and Ride the Lightning are true classics of the gramophone and are imbued with the greatness of rock which one cannot deny. I can still recall the shudder I felt when hearing the Master of Puppets track, which has the central section which is full of drama and mystery throughout. Other tracks which I felt are also great are the opening battery which also comes alive in the S and M album recorded many years later as well as the incredible energy of Welcome Home (Sanitarium) which is surely the signature Metallica track which I would definitely take with me to a desert island. Here one can observe the acousmatic tendencies of these songs where the mind links with what is going on behind the scenes especially in the final song on Master of Puppets which is called Damage Incorporated.

Other Metallica albums which I found hugely interesting were the finely titled 'And Justice for All' and the latest ones Load and Re-Load. These are perhaps stylistically different from those which I have described earlier but in a sense they are also a logical development from those of the past. James Hetfield's guitar is slightly more pronounced even in Load and his vocals are

perhaps tamer and calmer in these versions. Metallica continue to be one of the most important bands in this genre and have definitely changed my previous conceptions about rock music which perhaps were slightly too compartmentalized before.

Yet another band which was provided as part of the free sources in this course was the legendary Black Sabbath. With a line up including Tony Iommi, Geezer Butler and the great Ozzy Osbourne, one could not fail to be incredibly enthused by everything they played and recorded. The first album called Black Sabbath was full of great songs such as War Pigs and the album's title track was also quite a shocker. The band's development continued to thrill me consistently especially with the issue of several new albums such as Sabbath Bloody Sabbath, Paranoid and Live at Last which was one of the first records I ever bought in my youthful days as a rock enthusiast. The characteristic hues of Osbourne's voice cannot fail to thrill and especially in the later albums, Osbourne is a signature to the band which continues to thrill even to this day. Black Sabbath also developed quite well in their later years when other band members joined the group such as the vocalist Ronnie James Dio. Here one cannot fail to be thrilled by the deep qualities of Dio's voice especially in albums such as Mob Rules and Heaven and Hell where the music really comes together in more ways than one. Rock music can truly be understood when one follows these great bands who always have something to say whatever they do.

## **The experience also brought me closer to the study of acousmatics in this regard.**

Examples of bands which use acousmatics in their music

Helloween:

This German speed metal band was extremely popular in the 1980's and is very instructive as a study for a proper revival. Albums such as the first mini LP Helloween, Walls of Jericho and the two Keeper of the Seven Keys demonstrate a thorough knowledge of guitar playing and an intense understanding of what speed metal is all about. Those wishing to study rock music would do well to be exposed to the methods of Helloween so some listening time during the course is certainly in order. The riffs and techniques of Kai Hansen are surely extremely important for anyone studying guitar playing in greater detail and some exposure to these methods are important. Another aspect which is perhaps slightly overlooked in the course is that of drum playing which is occasionally abandoned and left by the wayside so some exposure on the drumming techniques of the Helloween drummer would be a huge boon to those looking at this genre of playing as their future.

## **Judas Priest – history of rock and transformation of a band over the decades.**

Incredibly, a band like Judas Priest is still going strong after almost three decades of being in the limelight although their contribution has been reduced over the years. However, they are an excellent case study for those prospective musicians who wish to learn the art of guitar playing in much greater detail with Glenn Tipton and KK Downing surely two of the finest

guitarists who ever walked this earth and who continue up to this day to shock and awe with their incredible empathy and methods. The course could study some seminal albums such as Sad Wings of destiny, Sinner, Stained Class, defenders of the Faith and Painkiller to really understand what guitar playing is all about. Vocalists who are also looking for a career in this genre should look no further than the great Rob Halford who is a singer of incredible power in every department.

### **Conclusion:**

Sound art and acousmatics go hand in hand and these examples have demonstrated that one can find these formats in several different musical genres but they are basically the more prevalent in film music, experimental sound and rock music. Although the study of this genre is still somewhat backward and retrograde there does appear to be a moving force in this respect as the styles and genres which are different always have a certain amount of interplay between them. Acousmatics is a new art which certainly deserves a lot more exposure than it is getting today or at the moment and this essay has discussed how it can get amplified in every respect.

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